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OCTOBER 561

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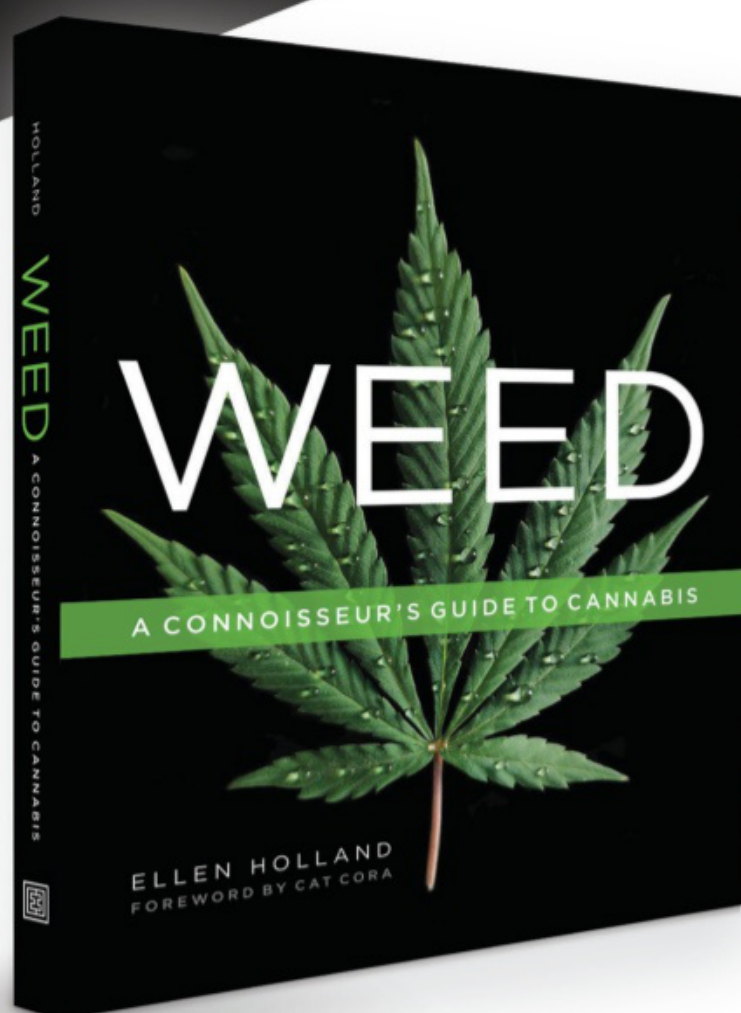
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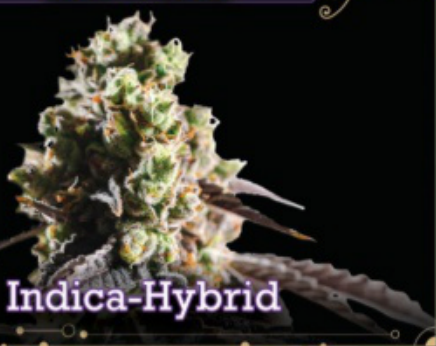
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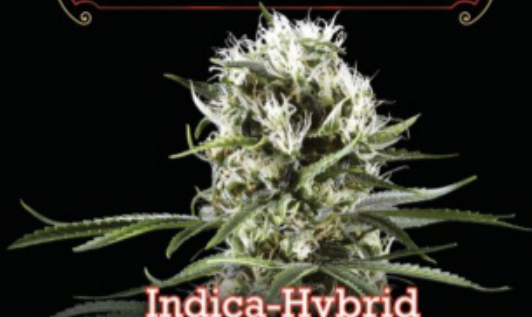
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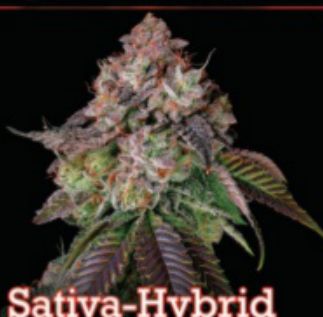
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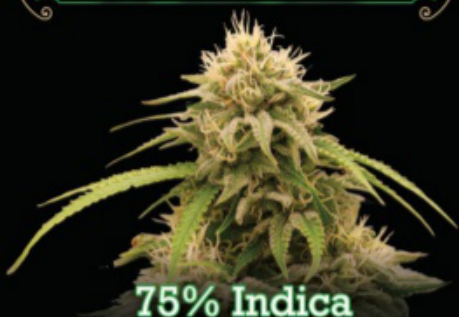
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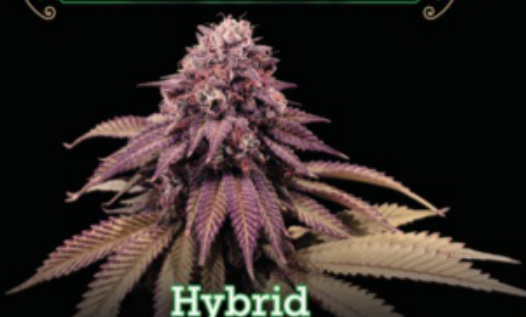
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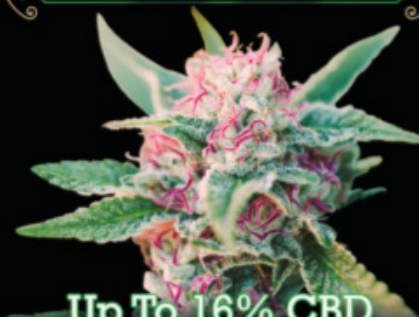
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October 2022 // Volume #561

CENTERFOLD:

PHOTOS BY JUSTIN CANNABIS - PG. 67-70

ON THE COVER



Harvest Season

Cultivators spend months meticulously caring for their cannabis plants, ensuring that they have the correct amount of light, water, and nutrients to grow big buds, but that's only half the challenge. Once the harvesting season begins, it's time to employ the best methods of care to ensure that those flowers are trimmed and cured to perfection, are free from mold and excess humidity, and still contain deliciously preserved terpenes. In this year's annual Harvest Issue we provide a collection of content that celebrates the power of sungrown cannabis, essential harvest tips and advice, the future of drying and curing cannabis, and so much more.

STRAIN: LOOPY FRUIT, FARM
SUNBOLDT GROWN, @SUNBOLDTGROWN
PHOTO: PHIL EMERSON, @PHILEMERSON

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The Power of the Sun

Solful is a Northern California-based brand that approaches the cannabis dispensary model from a different perspective. It only sells 100% sungrown cannabis, and only offers products from brands that meet a strict set of standards, all while supporting heritage cannabis farms in the Emerald Triangle and local community organizations.

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Drying, Curing & Trimming

When harvest time comes around, it's a challenge to determine which methods of drying, curing, and trimming are best. Three experts talk with *High Times* about their personal tips to prepare cannabis flower in order to make it consumption-ready.

DEPARTMENTS

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Following the Spirit

Breeder Katie Jeane has spent the last seven years cultivating Pink Boost Goddess, a multi-award-winning strain that is known for its high percentage of THCV. Grown at Emerald Spirit Botanicals farm, Jeane embraces regenerative farming practices and aims to achieve harmony in all things.



FROM LEGACY TO LICENSED

Richard Bardsley
General Manager of Cultivation
Elevated Cannabis Co.

HOW THE BEST GROWERS GROW BETTER.

AROYA

SEE HOW AT [AROYA.IO](https://aroya.io)

THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR

EVEN THOUGH THERE IS DANKNESS ALL YEAR round, the best season for cannabis is in the fall, when farmers harvest the outdoor crop. This is the time of year to smoke all the beautiful flowers grown under the sun! Nature has provided its bounty and we're obligated to incinerate it as fast as possible. Like many agricultural crops, cannabis is best to enjoy when ripeness has reached its peak. Quick! Before all that THC degrades to CBN, roll up a joint and join us for our annual Harvest Issue.

Growing your own weed supply, whether indoors or outdoors, is a relatively easy task. The real work comes in at harvest time. Growers take pains to ensure their plants are at optimal ripeness in terms of their resin production before giving them the chop. Then the flowers must be properly dried, trimmed, and cured. Finishing this process and puffing your own pot after months of tending to your plants is extremely gratifying. When you grow your own cannabis you are free to share it with others, and you're also free to trade it for different kinds. Pick up some harvest tips and learn how pot's post-production process is evolving with freeze drying technology; this issue is all about reaping the benefits of what we sow. We've also included a nod to the magazine's longtime literary contributions with an original work of flash fiction by noted Israeli author Etgar Keret. What the world needs now is weed, sweet weed. 

Happy Croptober,

Ellen Holland
Editor in Chief



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LIFE FOR POT

Life for Pot has not received any donations or financial support from: government agencies, education institutions, advocacy groups, foundations, or the cannabis industry. We are free to rant.

The criminal justice system and the cannabis industry will not have integrity as long as nonviolent marijuana offenders are still serving egregious sentences for cannabis.

Scrolling through social media each morning has become uncomfortable, disturbing, and, dare I say, enraging. Algorithms have found my niche and feed me their hook.

There are the usual legal and sentencing feeds. Next come the more hopeful advocacy sites and champions for freedom. Ultimately the cannabis industry research, ads, and promotions speak their newfound voice imploring me to buy, promote, invest, and lobby for their investment. This niche of social media now asks for lobbying to oil the skids for business.

My mind quickly shifts to Hector McGurk, Ismael Lira, Pedro Moreno, and Parker Coleman. These are four individuals—and there are many more—who are destined to die in federal prison for a nonviolent marijuana-only offense. How does this compute?

They need clemency as a category from President Biden. They will not receive freedom from bills that ask for expungement of records for marijuana offenses for those already released. They will not be released by bills that request that they are able to go back to the court. They need clemency as a category from President Biden. Perhaps they will have some relief if Congress puts language in a bill that retroactively reduces their sentences, but the process will be messy.

My runway is short, and I know the landscape has changed in the last 30 years. In 1994, my brother, John Knock, was indicted for a marijuana conspiracy. It was nonviolent and he was a first-time offender. Although there were no victims and there was not a single physical piece of marijuana presented as evidence, in 2000 he was sentenced to two life terms plus 20 years.

I immediately began looking for other nonviolent marijuana-only offenders who were labeled “marijuana kingpins” and were given life without parole. In the late ’80s there were a few, but these sentences began to soar in the ’90s. After the 1994 Clinton Crime Bill [passed] there were many. This bill was 365 pages

long and included money for 100,000 more police and almost 10 billion dollars for more prisons. They had to be filled.

In 2008, John’s appeals had all been denied and I began contacting the people in prison who fit the criteria of nonviolent marijuana only serving life without parole. I put their stories on a website [called] Life for Pot. There were many [who shared their stories], John Knock, Larry Duke, Eugene Fischer, Paul Free, Randy Lanier, Billy Dekle, Leopoldo Hernandez-Miranda, Charles Cundiff, and the list goes on. There were also people in state prisons like Jeff Mizanskey and Richard DeLisi.

I needed to advocate for the category: marijuana only with no violent charges. The website went up and I received messages that I was wrong, they could not be nonviolent marijuana only. Other messages from sentencing reform advocates said that the category was too exclusive. Others objected to the words pot and marijuana. I was told that I should only refer to it as cannabis. I responded: “If you are locked in an 8 x 10 cage with another person you don’t care what it is called.” They know the strength of the current [laws] and it is not language. Watching this evolution of the legal cannabis business while serving life without parole and other egregious sentences for the same product has to enrage you.

I’ve purchased cannabis stocks and watched as they thrive and also disappear. Tens of millions of dollars are spent lobbying for the industry and protecting the turf that is the product—medical and recreational. Lobbyists for the industry can be found in the halls of Congress hoping to help craft the hundreds of bills that are introduced.

Congress and advocacy groups have selected many categories for advocating and legislating sentencing relief e.g. crack cocaine disparity, juveniles, women, disadvantaged minorities, etc. but the category of marijuana has not been addressed.

The First Step Act [was signed into law in December 2018 and] addressed many categories but did not include this group for a second look. It’s time for compassion, courage, and honesty. **HT**

Beth Curtis
Founder of Life for Pot

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Colorado Governor Announces Recipients of Cannabis Business Grant

Colorado Gov. Jared Polis announced the first batch of businesses in the state to receive funding via the state's Cannabis Business Pilot Grant on July 7. Sixteen cannabis retailer applicants aspiring to launch businesses received funding under the program, with the goal to "save small businesses money, foster equity and diversity in the cannabis industry, and create good-paying jobs for Coloradans." The governor acknowledged how the cannabis industry supports the state economy. "Our nation-leading work promoting equity and supporting innovation in Colorado's thriving cannabis industry supports our economy, saves small businesses money, and ensures our state remains the best business-friendly destination in the country," Polis said in a statement. "I'm proud to see this multi-year effort result in transformative grants to deserving applicants."

Read more at [HighTimes.com](https://www.hightimes.com)



Washington, D.C. Mayor Signs Medical Cannabis Self-Certification Bill

Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser signed a bill on July 6 that will make access for medical cannabis patients in the District of Columbia a whole lot easier. The Medical Marijuana Self-Certification Emergency Amendment Act of 2022 will allow patients in the medical cannabis program to self-certify their qualifying condition for the treatment—meaning they won't have to receive a doctor's recommendation in order to receive a medical cannabis card, like many other jurisdictions require. Bowser hailed the new ordinance as a victory both for patients and medical cannabis providers. "We have made it a priority over the years to build a more patient-centric medical marijuana program and this legislation builds on those efforts," Bowser said in a statement. "We know that by bringing more medical marijuana patients into the legal marketplace in a timely manner and doing more to level the playing field for licensed medical marijuana providers, we can protect residents, support local businesses, and provide clarity to the community." The bill became effective immediately.

Read more at [HighTimes.com](https://www.hightimes.com)



On Instagram

For this particular highlight on *#Macro-Monday*, we have a hermaphroditic plant photographed by @terpshotz and grown by @thegratefulseed company. "Papaya reverted from female to male... In one of these shots we can appreciate the pollination of a female flower immersed in a cloud of male pollen," the post reads. The first shot shows a female flower with male traits and the shot pictured here shows some of its flowers being pollinated. Take a look at the powdery pollen adhering to the female flower hairs.



Tweet your best high observations and comments our way (@HIGH_TIMES_Mag) for a chance to be featured on this page! And be sure to follow us on Facebook: (Facebook.com/HighTimesMag) and Instagram: (@hightimesmagazine) for all the latest news as it's happening!

@DOT50AE @HIGH_TIMES_Mag The German "police" caught a guy in a wheelchair who just smoked his medical dose and grounded him because of that. They brought him back home and told him to stay there cause DUI is forbidden. Tell the world about these stories plz.

@SOg303 @HIGH_TIMES_Mag More Colorado cannabis unions! If they really diversified the mom and pop shops would flourish instead its tax stamps with backdoor deals *#CannabisShouldBeHumanARight*

@jmchopchop @HIGH_TIMES_Mag Commercial driver's license holders are subject to random and frequent drug tests. The fact that thc stays in your system for so long prevents even occasional smoking. It's crazy that someone can get fired on a Wednesday for smoking on the weekend.

@TokerFly @HIGH_TIMES_Mag and @LUBBOCK_JUSTICE Automatic state jail felony for >.01 g of canna concentrate, But hey *#America* is free and *#Texas* believes in states rights over your civil liberties. @GovAbbott @tedcruz @DanPatrick @KenPaxtonTX they'll take your money and call you a criminal. @POTUS @VP WSY?

@lusk_julian @HIGH_TIMES_Mag [I was just arrested] in New Hampshire with 3 grams of badder and they charged [me] with a felony and it's only a civil violation to have less than 5 grams of "hash/concentrates." They didn't give a shit that I have my medical marijuana card and had it in the trunk.





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using 50-State Legal industrial hemp vs actual cannabis.



HEMP MARKETS SEEKING TO HARVEST SOME STABILITY IN THE NEW NORMAL

WHILE LAWMAKERS ON CAPITOL HILL AND IN RESPECTIVE state houses alike go around about the expanding legalization of cannabis cultivation, growing demand for hemp in several industries represents significant impetus for the market. Used in various products ranging from biofuels, construction materials, and automotive parts to clothing, health foods, and organic body care, hemp represents a Trojan horse of sorts for federal legalization of cannabis.

This autumn marks the eighth season

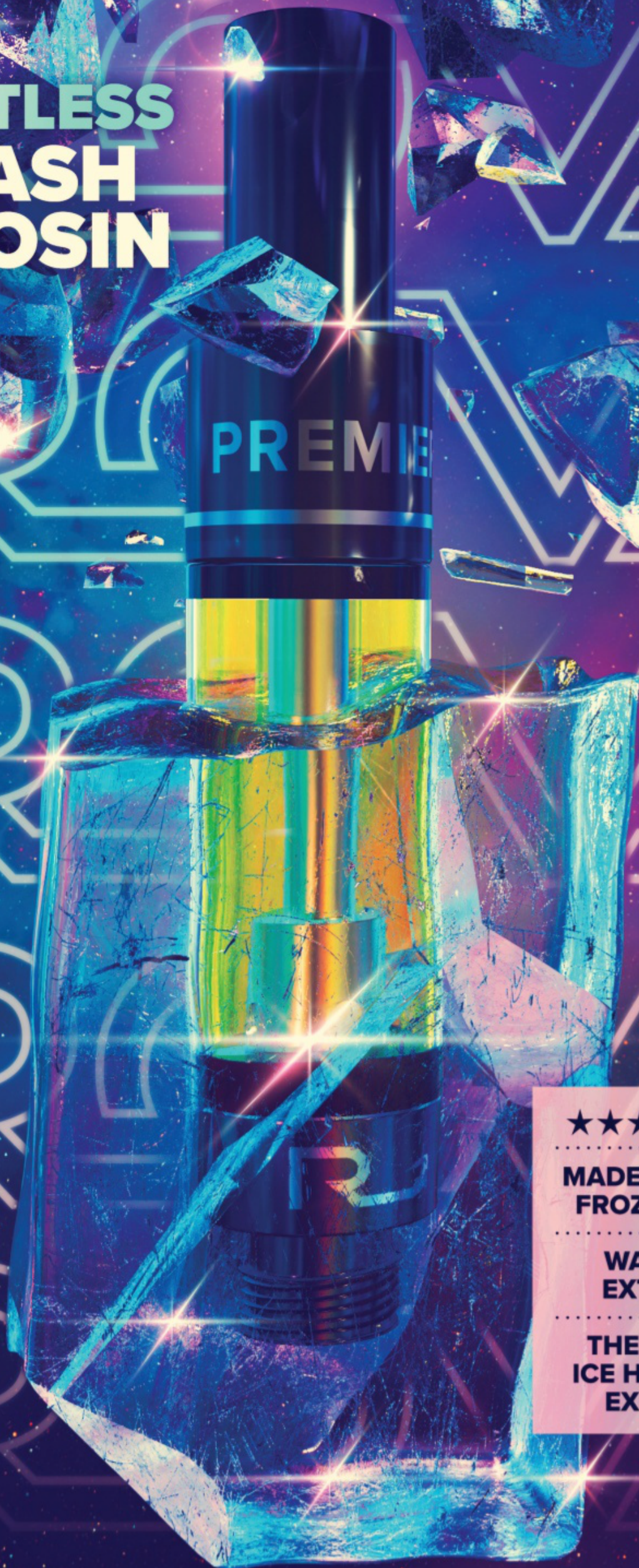
for an industrial hemp harvest since passage of the 2014 Farm Bill. While producers in some states could legitimately be considered veterans of hemp production (albeit through some dramatic trial and error), the learning curve remains steep. By the time that the 2018 Farm Bill expanded provisions to remove it from the list of U.S. federal restricted substances and legalize hemp cultivation as an agricultural commodity, initiatives had stirred the interest of farmers, resulting

in its broader availability.

No cannabis product can contain more than 0.3% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), nor any hemp grown without a state-issued license. In Europe, industrial hemp with less than 0.2% THC concentration is permitted for cultivation. Most American growers originally aimed to farm and sell their plants for their CBD, although others have always grown it for its grain or fiber. Advocates complain that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) hamstrung the industry by refusing to allow the sale of CBD as a food product or dietary supplement since the compound is a patented and approved ingredient in a prescription drug for treatment against childhood epilepsy.

Last year, U.S. producers specifically grew more hemp crops for fiber than in any other year since the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill. Nevertheless, they remained vexed by the chicken-and-egg dilemma continually confronting the national fiber supply chain: large acreage is necessary to convince investors to provide capital to build regional processing facilities, yet established processing infrastructure is necessary to warrant large-scale hemp fiber production under contract. >>

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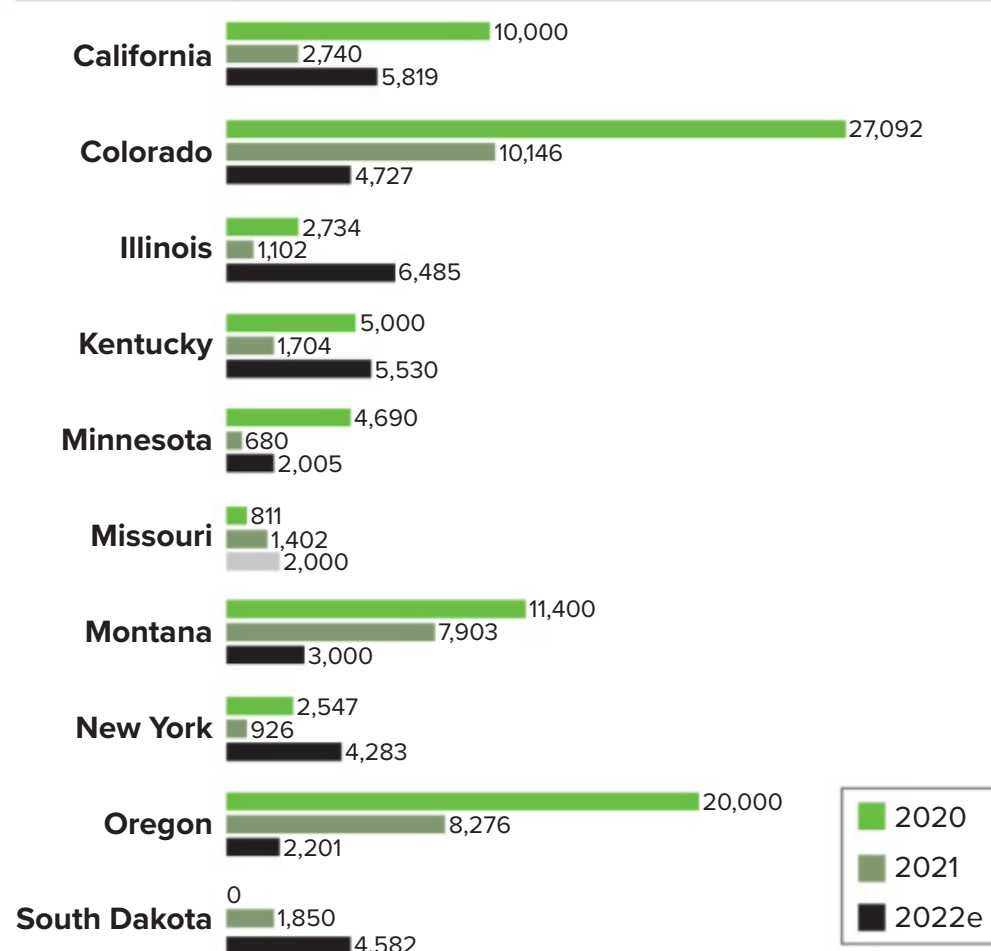
For a spell, delta-8 THC offered some saving grace for CBD producers and extractors, but its promise proved short-lived. In September 2021, coinciding with federal guidance from the FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the price of delta-8 THC declined for the third-consecutive month, slipping below \$1,000 per kilogram in a 9% decrease from August. By last spring, the observed price for delta-8 THC distillate declined for the eleventh consecutive month. The low end of the reported price range was steady at \$400 per kilogram, while the high end of the observed price range declined \$50 month-over-month to \$800 per kilogram.

“Last year, U.S. producers specifically grew more hemp crops for fiber than in any other year since the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill.”

Noting that, American agricultural experts still warn that it might take years for the domestic hemp market to mature and stabilize. Until then, hemp is likely to remain a specialty crop (e.g., cranberries cherries or tulips) rather than compete on par with major commodities like corn or soybeans.

TOP 10: PLANTED HEMP ACREAGE BY STATE

(2020-2022 estimate)



Apart from the pandemic’s disruptions, the significant variability in recent years between licensed, planted, and harvested U.S. hemp has been compounded by bureaucratic inaction and red tape.

Since 2020 and the disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic, early adopters in Colorado and Oregon have seen acreage declines of 83% and 89%, respectively. Conversely, states which established their programs later have meanwhile ramped up dramatically: Illinois and South Dakota have seen increases of 137% and 148% apiece.

Overall, while far less hemp is being grown nationwide this year, significant increases in acreage have been seen in states where fiber- and grain-processing infrastructure has been developed. While people in Colorado and Kentucky grew hemp as early as 2014, South Dakota was among the latest states to establish rules for hemp production, seeing its first crop last year.

In some ways, coming late to the party had its advantages: South Dakota farmers sat out the CBD hype, and dodged the harsh lessons learned by Montana growers who still find themselves sitting on unsold CBD biomass years after the fact. Instead, South Dakota has welcomed the development of multiple fiber processors engaged in contracts for 8,000 acres worth of production this year. Though they will yield only 57% of that—4,582 acres—it nevertheless registers as a success story for the value chain to see contracts fulfilled, farmers paid, and processed material entering the market.

Outside of South Dakota, a slower, yet more successful approach is found in Kansas, which nearly doubled from 542 acres in 2021 to 1,062 in 2022. The acreage has grown in tandem with the state’s processing capacity, mainly driven by South Bend Industrial Hemp, based in Great Bend. Similarly, after Missouri registered 811 acres in 2020, it expanded that by nearly 2.5 times to 2,000 acres over the past two years, spurred by the establishment of processor Midwest Natural Fiber. In New York, too, the Empire State expanded its acreage by more than 4.6 times, from 926 acres planted last year to a reported 4,283 acres this year, according to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Going forward, New Frontier Data expects to see hemp acreage continue rising incrementally in 2023 as the states’ processors will need to secure more contracts with growers for increased material as they scale operations and capacity throughout the next 12 months. Given the current state of national politics and political impasse on Capitol Hill, that may have to stand for progress toward federal cannabis legalization, for now. **HT**



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GOTTA GROW

Tom Rand helps veterans grow medical cannabis by providing access to equipment and educational resources.

I AM INCREDIBLY PROUD TO BRING YOU ANOTHER FORMER UNITED States Marine 0311 rifleman (like myself) to this month's Veteran Chronicles: Tom Rand.

Rand is a Marine Corps veteran, activist, proud father, and husband who was born and raised in Reading, Massachusetts. At the ripe young age of 17, Rand bravely stepped on the yellow footprints at Parris Island, South Carolina, a tradition that all recruits undergo in their transition from civilian to U.S. Marine. He was immediately deployed to Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983, and when he returned home, he was stationed at Camp Geiger, North Carolina, for the duration of his service.

“I truly believe that if a state only allows sales but not home grows then that’s just fucking taxation.”

- Tom Rand

Today, Rand will proudly tell you that he has broken free from the chains of big pharmaceutical companies and the addiction that often comes with those very strong chains—chains that very few veterans can break. Now, Rand proudly pays allegiance to longtime Korean War veteran brothers for leading him down the path toward medicinal cannabis. That’s all it took to open his eyes wide to the healing powers and possibilities of cannabis.

Nearly a decade ago, Rand proudly picked up the nickname “Tom Cape Gardener”—a reference to Rand’s mission to help any and all veterans who wanted the opportunity to grow their own cannabis. Rand reaches out to other local growers and producers in search of donations, such as used equipment, seeds, lights, ballasts, etc., to give to his fellow veterans for free. Rand has never charged a veteran a penny for anything that has been donated. As Rand likes to put it, he does it “all for a handshake,” a motto he has used since the founding of his organization.

Five years ago, Rand realized his mission wasn’t a solo journey. Rand needed assistance from other patriots and veterans, which led to the creation of his organization, Patriots Helping Vets. It initially began as a Facebook group that helped him network with veterans and civilians in his community. Patriots Helping Vets now brings together those who are willing to jump on board with the organization’s mission: “To provide U.S. veterans the equipment, support, and education for horticultural therapy.” Rand and his organization are currently working on becoming a 501(c)(4) nonprofit charity to officially give more veterans nationwide the opportunity to become a self-sustaining, productive grower in their gardens. Ultimately, Rand empowers veterans and teaches them how to cultivate their own herbal medicine. >>

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- **High Times: How many years passed after your military service before you learned about the healing properties of medical cannabis?**

Tom Rand: I learned about the benefits from using cannabis medicinally about 25 years after getting out.

- **Do you believe that we will see the end of cannabis prohibition in your lifetime?**

I would like to see it repealed and allow every citizen the ability to grow [cannabis] and get the true benefit of horticultural therapy. I don't have much faith in our government to legalize it without it being a shit show.

- **What organizations or individuals have been a staple in providing donations or volunteering to help foster and grow your mission?**

My family has always been my biggest supporters. My wife, Marty, and kids, Josh and Mary, helped make my dream into a mission. Ian Schlesinger from Purpose Genetics has provided thousands of seeds over the years. The Massachusetts cannabis community, without their support I don't know where my mission would be. The Harvest Cup, New England's best cannabis cup, and Masscann [and] The Boston Freedom Rally. Anthony B has always been in my corner with supporting our mission, donating hundreds of clones every spring to give out. We had a lot of help along the way *unbreakabowl.com*, *stoneddust.com*, and Pot Pockets have helped with giveaways throughout the years. Stem Haverhill has been incredibly supportive. To see where we have come from to having Growers Choice Horticultural lighting, Petratoools, MicrobeLifeHydro, ChilLED grow lights, The Soil King, Project Delta 518, Brothers Grimm Seeds's Rick [Campanella] always goes beyond to show us support. Now the misfits help steer the mission in the right direction. They consist of Shar, Rick, Jeremy, Josh, Mary, Ian, Dari, Joe, Joseph, Ronnie, Elton, Kyle, LaToya, and Dan. It's amazing to see the passion they have towards our mission.

- **In one word, please describe the current state of legalization in Massachusetts.**

Unfair. The [veterans] that have a true passion of growing medicine have a lot harder of a time, it seems, than the greedy bottom liners. The ones [who] suffered the most from the dark ages have the hardest time to open a grow operation or dispensary. I had the privilege to follow Big Ed and Ed Desousa's journey of following their dream. After a lot of hurdles and hoops to go through, they created RiverRun Gardens, which produces some of the finest cannabis in the state. Why? Because they have pride and passion for their products.

- **What year did Massachusetts legalize medical and recreational cannabis?**

Medical passed on November 6, 2012, and recreational on December 15, 2016.



- **Did the state of Massachusetts add any benefits to veterans as part of its legalization programs? Anything such as free medication or free authorizations for vets programs?**

None that I'm aware of, but we have always helped veterans with free meds and FECO [full extract cannabis oil], along with passing on donated lights, nutrients, clones, and seeds. We just recently teamed up with Dr. Marion McNabb from The Cannabis Center of Excellence and Gibby's Garden [who] launched the first Massachusetts Veterans Cannabis Access Research Project. Veterans can enroll and complete a baseline survey and have the opportunity (only 450 qualifying veterans) can receive two 1/8 ounces of flower, two pre-rolls, and a 15 ml of tincture for only \$2.

- **Where do you see Patriots Helping Vets in 2032?**

Hopefully we will be legally helping every veteran from every state to grow their own meds. We want to eventually have co-ops across the nation that covers operating expenses [and] then donate the balance of harvest to local veterans [who] can't grow or afford to buy this wonderful medicine. Become more involved with the lobbying of the right for every veteran to grow their own meds at home. I truly believe that if a state only allows sales but not home grows then that's just fucking taxation. Community cannabis gardens [should be allowed] across the country with classes and workshops all for free to veterans—they've paid too much already to be charged a penny.

- **What is your all-time favorite strain of cannabis?**

Maui Wau, aka Maui Wowie, is by far my most beneficial strain.

- **Any mentors you would like to praise or give thanks to?**

Dr. Howard Irwin for bringing my soil game to a whole new level with using natural local resources. Harold and Keith for showing me what this wonderful plant was really about. They taught me instead of growing a ton. **HT**

 patriotshelpingvets.org

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MARKET ANALYSIS

The THMQ for the late summer saw the Southern market eclipse the West, as the cost of an average cannabis ounce dropped an impressive **\$15** in the South to **\$300** a zip, while the Western market experienced a **\$13** climb to **\$303**. The East remained relatively stable, dipping only two dollars to **\$309** an ounce, which saw the overall price of pot nationwide sink one buck to **\$304**. In the Top 5, last month's fourth-place finisher, Ice Cream Cake, rose to the top of the rankings with some extreme price variances, both high and low.

TOP 5 STRAINS

- 1

Ice Cream Cake

4 @ \$318
- 2

GMO

3 @ \$245
- 3

Gelato

2 @ \$380
- 4

Girl Scout Cookies

2 @ \$315
- 5

OG Kush

2 @ \$243

WINNERS



↑ Altria Group Inc	NYSE: MO	\$42.31 (+0.36)
↑ Global X Cannabis ETF	NYSE: MSOS	\$16.89 (+0.29)
↑ AdvisorShares Pure US Cannabis ETF	NYSE: MSOS	\$10.87 (+0.17)
↑ Tilray Inc	NAS: TLRY	\$3.22 (+0.07)
↑ ETFMG Alternative Harvest ETF	NYSE: MJ	\$5.75 (+0.05)

LOSERS



↓ Jazz Pharmaceuticals PLC	NAS: JAZZ	\$154.50 (-1.13)
↓ AbbVie Inc	NYSE: ABBV	\$152.46 (-0.77)
↓ Constellation Brands Inc.	NYSE: STZ	\$240.56 (-0.58)
↓ Innovative Industrial Properties Inc	NYSE: IIPR	\$110.91 (-0.30)
↓ Cara Therapeutics Inc	NAS: CARA	\$9.45 (-0.16)

HIGHEST 10 STATES

HAWAII	\$530
Kauai PBJ	
ILLINOIS	\$520
Gelato	
ALABAMA	\$500
Strawberry Kush	
UTAH	\$483
Ice Cream Cake	
MISSOURI	\$473
Runtz	
ARKANSAS	\$454
The Soap	
NEW JERSEY	\$423
Mimosa	
OHIO	\$420
Lucked Up	
NEBRASKA	\$420
Birthday Cake	
NEW MEXICO	\$402
God's Gift	

LOWEST 10 STATES

OKLAHOMA	\$40
GMO	
OREGON	\$50
Happy Chillmore	
GEORGIA	\$140
Wedding Cake	
KANSAS	\$150
Purple Punch	
MARYLAND	\$168
Burnt Toast	
LOUISIANA	\$170
Fruity Pebbles	
MASSACHUSETTS	\$180
Zombie Virus	
CALIFORNIA	\$194
Ice Cream Cake	
FLORIDA	\$196
Ice Cream Cake	
NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$200
Gelato Mint	

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THE POWER OF THE SUN

Solful partners with small, outdoor farms to offer 100% sungrown cannabis.

by Ashley Kern

THE VISION BEHIND THE CREATION OF THE BRAND AND DISPENSARY known as Solful was to invent a dispensary model that didn't really exist yet—a cannabis business that sells only sungrown flowers and partners only with cannabis brands that meet a strict set of production standards.

Over the past five years, Solful has developed into a one-of-a-kind brand that has won numerous accolades for its unique dispensary values. Solful has received the “Best Cannabis Dispensary” award from *The Press Democrat's* Readers' Choice Awards since 2019—a testament to its ongoing dedication to quality. In February, Solful was also named in Leafly's “Cannabis buyer's guide to outstanding outdoor flower of 2021” as the best in the state of California. In April, Solful's CEO and co-founder Eli Melrod was included in the *North Bay Business Journal's* Forty Under 40 list.

High Times spoke with Melrod about Solful's origin, the quality of sungrown cannabis, and the brand's dedication to supporting local cannabis growers in the Emerald Triangle. >>

▼ ELI MELROD TAKES IN A WHIFF OF A BUD WHILE VISITING A GROW.

HERE COMES THE SOL

●●●

Melrod was first introduced to cannabis after he learned of his father's pancreatic cancer diagnosis 20 years ago. Although his father was only given six months to live, medical cannabis helped treat his nausea and increase his appetite, allowing him to endure chemotherapy.

Melrod grew up in San Francisco, eventually attending a high school in the Haight-Ashbury District, made famous for its historic role in the development of cannabis culture starting in the 1960s, and later traveled to the East Coast for school. But by 2015, Melrod returned to Sonoma County, where his dad had relocated following his battle with cancer. He started working in a cannabis testing lab, which connected him to many local cultivators, manufacturers, and dispensary owners, but he noticed the current state of traditional dispensaries was less than ideal.

"In particular, back in 2015, every dispensary that I went into felt sort of like a head shop or like something really clinical," he says.

"If you come into Solful, you're not just gonna find a bunch of like Wedding Cake Gelato that was grown indoors. You're gonna find all kinds of really unique strains."

- Eli Melrod

Furthermore, he realized that few of these dispensaries celebrated sungrown, craft cannabis from the Emerald Triangle. Acting on this insight, Melrod met with a friend of his father's, entrepreneur Peter Dickstein, to seek business advice. Eventually, Melrod and Dickstein partnered as co-founders, and Solful was born.

"I still feel like, I can't really believe this is my life and my job because it was really a dream to build this dispensary vision that did everything I really thought a dispensary should do," Melrod says. >>







▲ THE SOLFUL TEAM.

“You can literally buy an eighth of pot at Solful, and if you hate it, you can come back, and we’ll make it right. We have a full exchange policy.”

- Eli Melrod

QUALITY IS KEY

●●●

Melrod’s vision to reinvent the traditional dispensary model was inspired by a commitment to supporting Northern California cultivators. Solful works with and buys directly from cannabis farms that grow 100% outdoors.

“In this day and age, it’s really rare for retailers to actually work directly with small heritage farmers in Northern California,” Melrod says. “In fact, I think we might be one of the only retailers in our entire region that does that, where we buy direct.”

Solful works with many farms in Northern California, such as Glentucky Family Farm, Alpenglow Farms, Moon Gazer Farms, and Esensia Gardens. Melrod is confident that sungrown cannabis from passionate growers such as these contains diverse properties that set them apart from indoor-grown flowers.

“If you come into Solful, you’re not just gonna find a bunch of like Wedding Cake Gelato that was grown indoors. You’re gonna find all kinds of really unique strains,” Melrod says. “[Strains] that are rich in THCV, [strains] that are rich in rare terpenes like ocimene, you know, just this

huge diversity and this real celebration of the craft heritage farmer in Northern California.”

Solful also carries a wide variety of other cannabis products, all of which also meet their strict standards. Brands such as Garden Society, Care By Design, Heritage Hash Co., and Rose Delights are just a few that have passed muster.

“So we have exacting standards of what we will and won’t allow in every category,” Melrod explains. “So in our edibles, we don’t allow any sort of artificial food coloring or flavorings or sweeteners, anything like that. In vapes, we always don’t allow any sort of additives. So we don’t allow any, you know, glycerin or glycols, or any of that stuff. We have specific exacting standards in every category to make sure that our products are safe

PHOTO: COURTESY SOLFUL



▲ ELI MELROD WITH JOSH KHANKHANIAN OF MOON GAZER FARMS.

and effective.”

Solful is so confident in the satisfaction and quality of these products that it offers a “happiness guarantee” return policy.

“You can literally buy an eighth of pot at Solful, and if you hate it, you can come back, and we’ll make it right. We have a full exchange policy,” Melrod says. “I can guarantee you if you try full-term organic

outdoor that’s testing at like 4.5% terpenes it is gonna be better than anything you’ve ever tried in your life. That was my experience. I grew up buying indoor cannabis thinking that was top shelf or whatever and like, point blank, you will never be able to replicate the sun, you will never achieve the like spectrum of terpenes, cannabinoids, and other compounds

you will get from living soil full-term cannabis.”

Solful currently has two dispensaries, located in Sebastopol and Santa Rosa, California, with another location set to open in San Francisco before the end of 2022. **HT**

 solful.com



BEAUTIFUL 100% OUTDOOR-GROWN BUDS. ▲

PHOTO: BRENNAN SPARK, @BRENNANSPARK PHOTOGRAPHY

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▼ ELI MELROD INSPECTING PLANTS WITH CRAIG JOHNSON FROM ALPENGLOW FARMS.

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DRYING, CURING & TRIMMING

Growing cannabis is only half the battle; the real work comes in at harvest time.

By Mark Miller



DRYING, CURING & TRIMMING

You've been trying your hand at cannabis cultivation over the past year or so, and now you've done it. You've finally harvested a batch of homegrown buds you can truly be proud of and can't wait to start smoking. One thing, though, that was only half the work. Now it's time for post-production, drying, trimming, and curing, the processes, methods, and techniques that will take your freshly grown flowers to their highest level in terms of quality, taste, and smokability.

The steps growers take after the plant is harvested, whether you're a cannabis company or a modest ganja grower, are essential for ensuring the quality of the crop. In cannabis, there are many different ways to process your harvest, including things like choosing to trim buds fresh off the plant or waiting for them to dry before manicuring. *High Times* spoke with three leading cultivators about which methods work best for them and how home growers can get the most out of their harvest.

"After you harvest the living plant from that point, it is, in a sense, a race against time," said Ali Jamalian, founder and owner of manufacturing company Sunset Connect. "I believe post-production is 50% of producing quality end-products. You can harvest a really amazing looking flower, but still really mess it up in post-production if you dry it too fast, or if you leave too much fan leaf on it.

"Cannabis post-production is just like wine; when you're looking at a plant that has so many different varieties of genetics, you can't treat them all the same. You can't treat them the same during cultivation, and you sure can't treat them the same during post-production." >>



PHOTO: JUSTIN CANNABIS





DRYING, CURING & TRIMMING

er of Talking Trees Farms. “Plants are chopped, weighed wet, then hung in a dark room that has great airflow and circulation with dehumidifiers set to 50% humidity, and then we usually take plants down after 7-10 days, when the stems will snap easily between your fingers.”

In terms of the time he spends drying the flowers, Nejedly said he doesn’t find value in drying the crop for more than 10 days.

“Some growers seem to find value in drying for more than seven to 10 days, but I don’t,” he said. “If I was going to hang longer, I would probably harvest earlier since the plant still ripens and matures once hung, for example. I don’t think you retain significant terpenes from drying longer.”

Nejedly also addressed the critical topic of moisture.

“Once the plant has dried properly to approximately 10% moisture content, you want to keep the plant intact on the stalk stored cool and dry until it is ready for processing,” he said. >>

Drying

➤ Once the crop is harvested, it’s time to dry. Drying the buds is essential not only to preserve and accentuate terpenes, but also to keep them fresh and bacteria/mold-free.

“We dry for 14 days, hanging the full plant upside down in really tall canopies, completely defoliated at 60 degrees temperature at 60% humidity,” said Anna Willey, CEO and head cultivator at CAM (California Artisanal Medicine). “In the dry room, which measures 1,150 square feet for a 550-light facility, we have it set up so the source of air is not just blowing in one space so that it’s evenly distributed throughout the entire canopy.”

Airflow in rooms used for drying cannabis flowers is essential.

“While you definitely want a good airflow in your rooms, at the same time, you don’t want to directly hit the plants with windy air,” said Jamalain. “It’s a little harsh for the curing process, and when buds are dried with direct air, they’re less flavorful after the cure because they’ve been dried a little too fast.”

When drying outdoor or greenhouse ganja, the approach is similar, yet the practice offers its own unique obstacles.

“We are careful about harvesting times in the greenhouse or full sun environment as you don’t want to harvest in the heat of the day,” said Craig Nejedly, owner and found-

“While you definitely want a good airflow in your rooms, at the same time, you don’t want to directly hit the plants with windy air.”

- Ali Jamalain



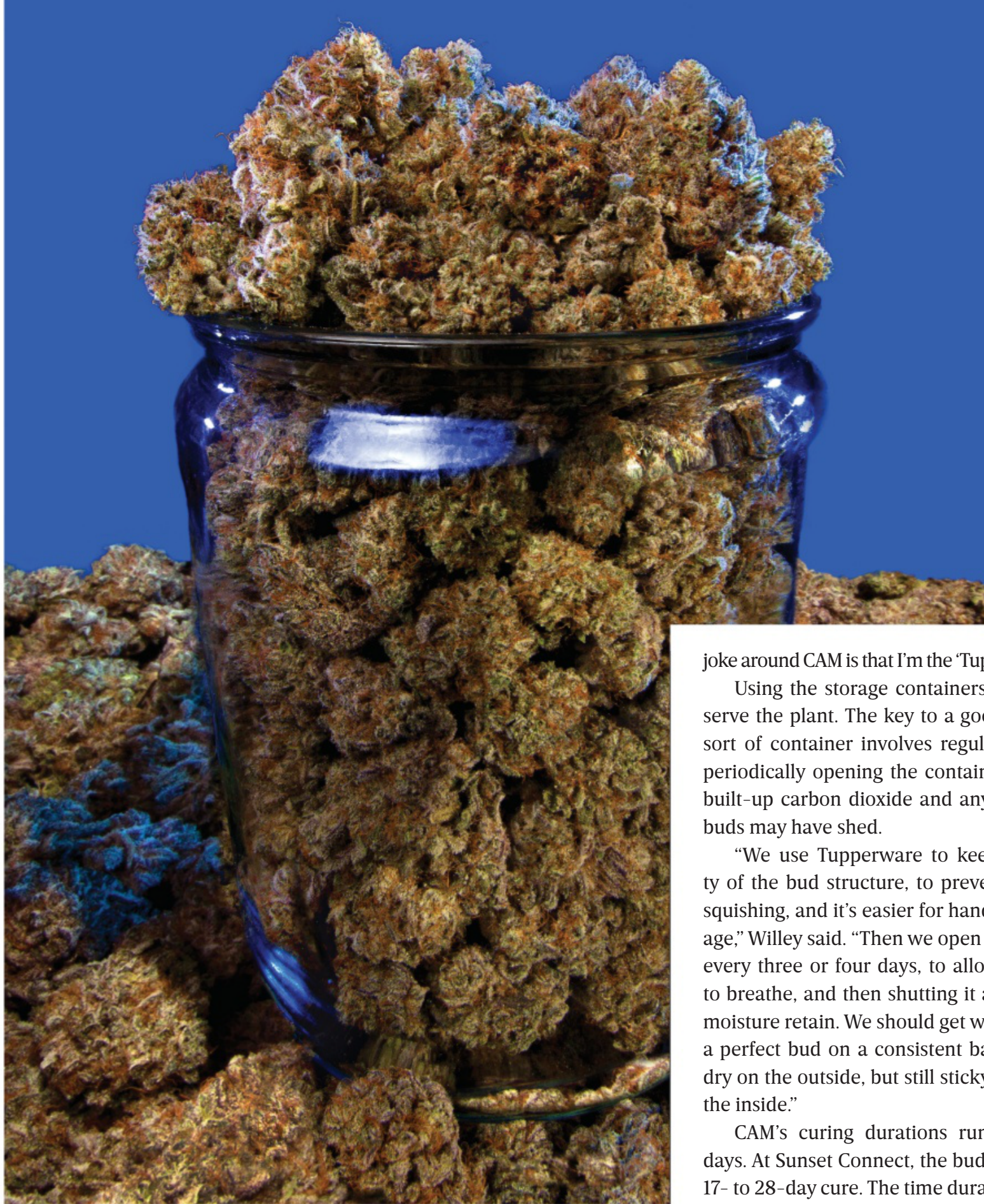


PHOTO: JUSTIN CANNABIS

Curing

➤ Curing is the most subtle step in the pot post-production process, in which properly dried cannabis is placed in airtight containers to eliminate destructive bacteria that cause mold and mildew. Consistent curing can also result in a smoother smoke and retain flavor and terpene ratios while reducing unwanted chlorophyll.

To cure buds at CAM, Willey uses a tool commonly found in American kitchens: Tupperware.

“We don’t just move [buds] into a room where they’re going to be in turkey bags. We actually leave them in food-grade containers,” Willey said. “The

joke around CAM is that I’m the “Tupperware lady.”

Using the storage containers helps to preserve the plant. The key to a good cure in any sort of container involves regular burping, or periodically opening the containers to release built-up carbon dioxide and any moisture the buds may have shed.

“We use Tupperware to keep the integrity of the bud structure, to prevent damage or squishing, and it’s easier for handling and storage,” Willey said. “Then we open the containers every three or four days, to allow the product to breathe, and then shutting it and letting the moisture retain. We should get what we hope is a perfect bud on a consistent basis, where it’s dry on the outside, but still sticky and moist on the inside.”

CAM’s curing durations run seven to 10 days. At Sunset Connect, the buds go through a 17- to 28-day cure. The time duration is “played by ear,” depending on the size of the nugs being treated.

When it comes to the cure, it’s all about balance for Nejedly.

“Curing is a balance of trying to control the humidity and oxidation of the plant matter versus overexposure to natural elements, so keeping things cool and dark and burping to not allow air to get too stale is crucial,” he said. “Cannabis is like avocado or any other fruit. [The buds] continue to ripen after harvest, and then there is a fine line between ripening to preservation and not getting too moist or exposed to too much light, or the flower deteriorates quickly. I think, once harvested, a plant or bud is at its best about four to five weeks after harvest if grown, dried, and cured well.”

▲ MANY CULTIVATORS CURE IN GLASS JARS.

Trimming

➤ With trimming cannabis there are many different methodologies, but the ultimate aim is to remove the sugar and fan leaves from around the bud.

“We treat our trimmers like they are literally the most important folks in the building because they are the last people to touch our product,” Willey said. “Our training for [trimmers] is very extensive; even if they’ve trimmed [elsewhere] for years, we retake them through the entire process because a lot of them have been conditioned to the ‘get in there and finish as fast as you can’ [in the trimming process]. The ‘We gotta get through 27 pounds of trimming today or else’ method. With the CAM way, our folks can take their time because trimming is really an art form.”

Willey elaborated on her company’s trimming processes.

“The biggest difference at CAM is that we do our trimming on-stem, which allows for the least amount of touching on the buds,” she said. “The bud actually stays on the stem, and not until the very end of the trimming process does the bud come off the stem. This way, there’s very minimal handling of the product. When you’re grabbing the bud, you’re disturbing the trichomes. You’re basically mauling the buds.”

Jamalian likewise emphasized the high priority afforded to their trimming processes.

“We’re a 100% hand-trim outfit; no machines,” he said. “I think machines butcher the weed.”

But, he explained, not all trim jobs are the same.

“Because we process our flower into so many differ-

ent products, we trim accordingly; sugar trim and the little snippings from the buds you inevitably have, are called ‘sugar trim,’ and we put those into our Fulton Fiver joints which cost only five bucks and are the best seller in San Francisco,” he said.

Jamalian disclosed that the difficulty of post-production work for any given strain even plays a role in selecting genetics. Strains such as Sour Diesel and Lamb’s Bread are sometimes difficult to trim.

“We treat our trimmers like they are literally the most important folks in the building because they are the last people to touch our product.”

- Anna Willey

“There are certain strains where our trimmers come to work and they hate it; when they have tiny little non-sugar leaves wedged between all the calyxes,” he said. “So while you might want to grow that strain (from a commercial perspective), you’re going to have an unhappy staff trimming it. I love Sour Diesel, but it’s a difficult trim. Lamb’s Bread is also not the most straightforward trim, but it’s worth it.”

Properly trimming cannabis plays a crucial role in preserving a product’s shelf life.

“Another step that helps longevity is keeping the flower on the stalk until it’s ready to trim,” Nejedly said. “The synergy of the plant on the stalk helps maintain its freshness, which degrades faster once the buds are cut from the stems.” >>



PHOTO: JUSTIN CANNABIS



Dry Trim vs. Wet Trim

➤ There are varying schools of thought when it comes to trimming the buds when they are fresh off the plant or after the curing process is complete.

Wiley and Nejedly agree that dry trim is best. However, Jamalian employs a two-stage method of both wet and dry trimming.

“On the wet trim, or primary trim, we like to take off all the water leaves or fan leaves, and we’ll leave on the sugar leaves; those are the medium-size leaves that still

▲ SOME TRIM CANNABIS FRESH OFF THE PLANT WHILE OTHERS WAIT TO TRIM ONCE THE CURING IS COMPLETE.

have a good amount of sugar or terpenes to them,” he said. “For example, Blue Dream doesn’t have a lot of sugar on the leaves, yet the buds were frosty and chunky and big, so you could actually do a primary wet trim and take all the leaves off and then dry the nugs and you’re ready to go. So Blue Dream offers a lower cost of post-production. Some plants, like those that have a nice purple leaf, I’ll probably leave those on during cure. But water leaf takes away yield during processing, so we try to prep buds for processing with as little stem or water leaf as possible when it’s sent to the trimmers for the secondary or dry trim.” >>



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Preserving Terpenes

▲ CRAIG NEJEDLY,
OWNER AND
FOUNDER OF
TALKING TREES,
SMELLS THE TERPS.

➤ It's tough to talk about weed or wax these days without a serious discussion of "terps," aka terpenes, the chemical compounds that give cannabis strains their individual signature alluring aromas and mouth-watering flavors. For post-production, preserving, and even enhancing, terps are essential to crafting the most desirable end-product.

Willey suggests seeking equilibrium.

"If you dry it too fast or leave the buds hanging for too long, you're going to negatively affect your terpenes, as well as if you cure and store buds in too hot or humid of a place," she said. Terpenes are just like babies; delicacy is key."

Nejedly likewise emphasized the role temperature plays in maintaining terpenes by avoiding heat.

"Terp preservation starts before harvest," he explained. "Growing indoors, we start gradually reducing the light intensity about 20 days before harvest to preserve terps. Then once the plant is harvested, it's all about being cool and dark to keep those terps."

A Close Shave Vs. Leaving the Leaf

➤ In the context of post-production, there is some debate between employing a close shave of the buds as opposed to allowing more sugar leaves to remain.

"It's a fine balance. In general, the consumer does not want to see too much leaf, but we also don't want to shave the bud," Nejedly said. "So it's literally a manicuring process that we train our trimmers to be mindful of, and more so pluck at the leaves and buds to manicure them, and not just chop away at it."

Sunset Connect's approach is flexible.

"We're strain specific; the strain will determine how much leaf to leave on it," Jamalian said. "You have to judge the flower by the genetics; if there are smaller, denser buds, we like to leave a little bit of fan leaf to cocoon and, in effect, cure the buds very gently. But other strains where you do have a lot of big sugar leaves, we'll take off every single fan leaf and let it cure super slow to let the THC finish ripening; sort of like when you pick bananas, they keep ripening. And so does THC; the resin glands are still producing."

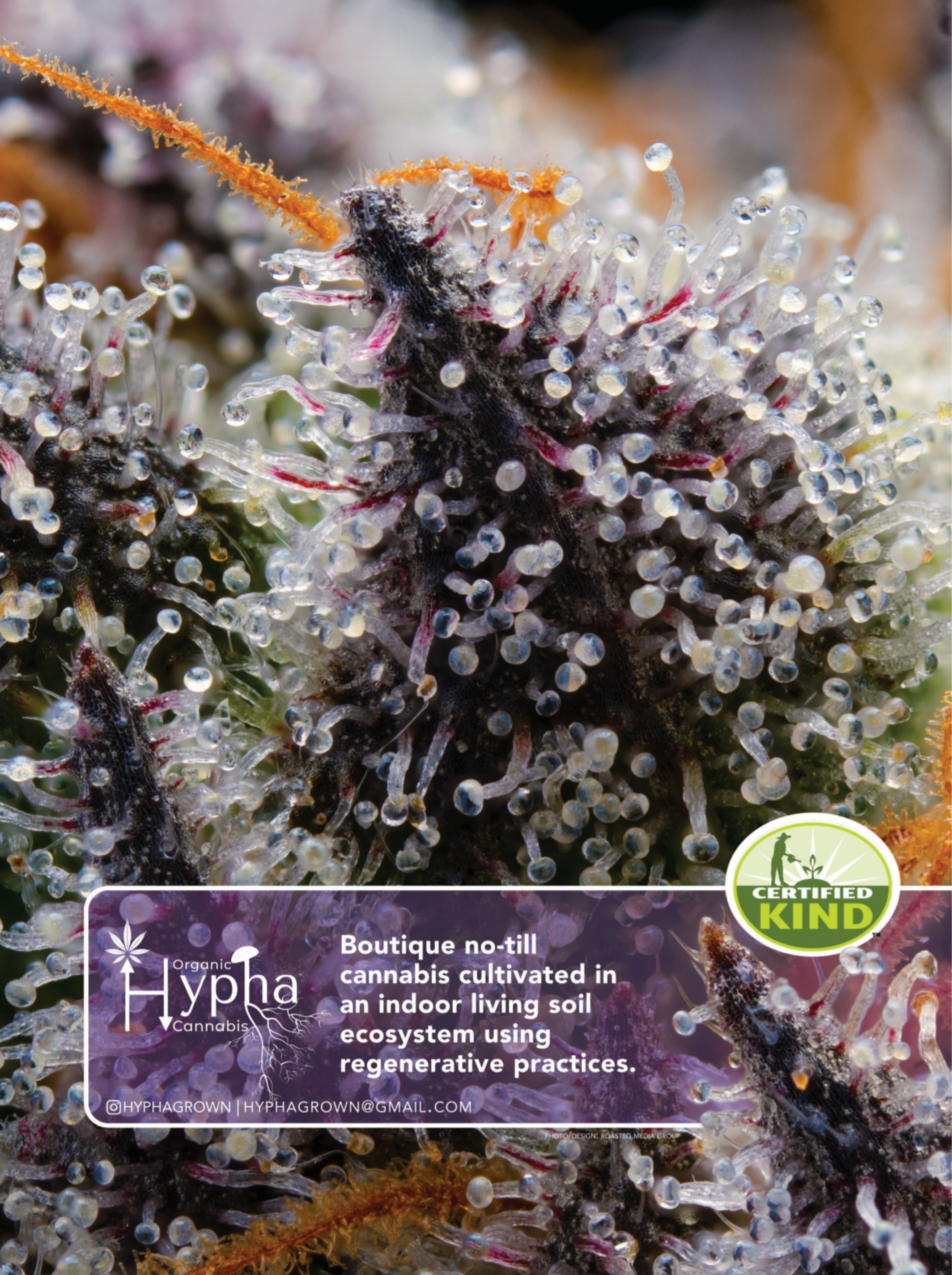
Willey was more definitive.

"I don't like a close shave because I like to make sure that the bud structure is honored," she said. "Some strains will have a little foxtail (irregular bud shape), but we try to honor the structure so that every bud doesn't look like a golf ball; that's my personal preference." >>



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OUTDOORS, A BREEZE FLOWING
THROUGH PLANTS HELPS DETER MOLD.



“If humidity is high when you harvest and you don’t use dehumidifiers and fans for airflow, the flowers will mold and be useless.”

- Craig Nejedly

It's All About the Humidity

➤ All three pro growers agreed that maintaining the correct humidity is the number one challenge to producing great ganja. Each of them explained strategies to combat the unwanted water vapor.

CAM utilizes the Quest 506 commercial humidifier to extract humidity from inside its grow rooms.

“Air conditioners also work well on getting the humidity out of the rooms, at the end of harvest as well as during post-production,” Willey said.

Nejedly echoed his contemporaries’ feelings.

“Humidity is the biggest factor during the post-harvest process,” he said. “If humidity is high when you harvest and you don’t use dehumidifiers and fans for airflow, the flowers will mold and be useless. Dehumidifiers are an easy solution readily available at any hardware store or grow store. Temps should be under 70°F and ideally in the 55-60°F range. Colder is better than warmer, and humidity you can set at 50%, and for a slower cure up to 60%.” >>



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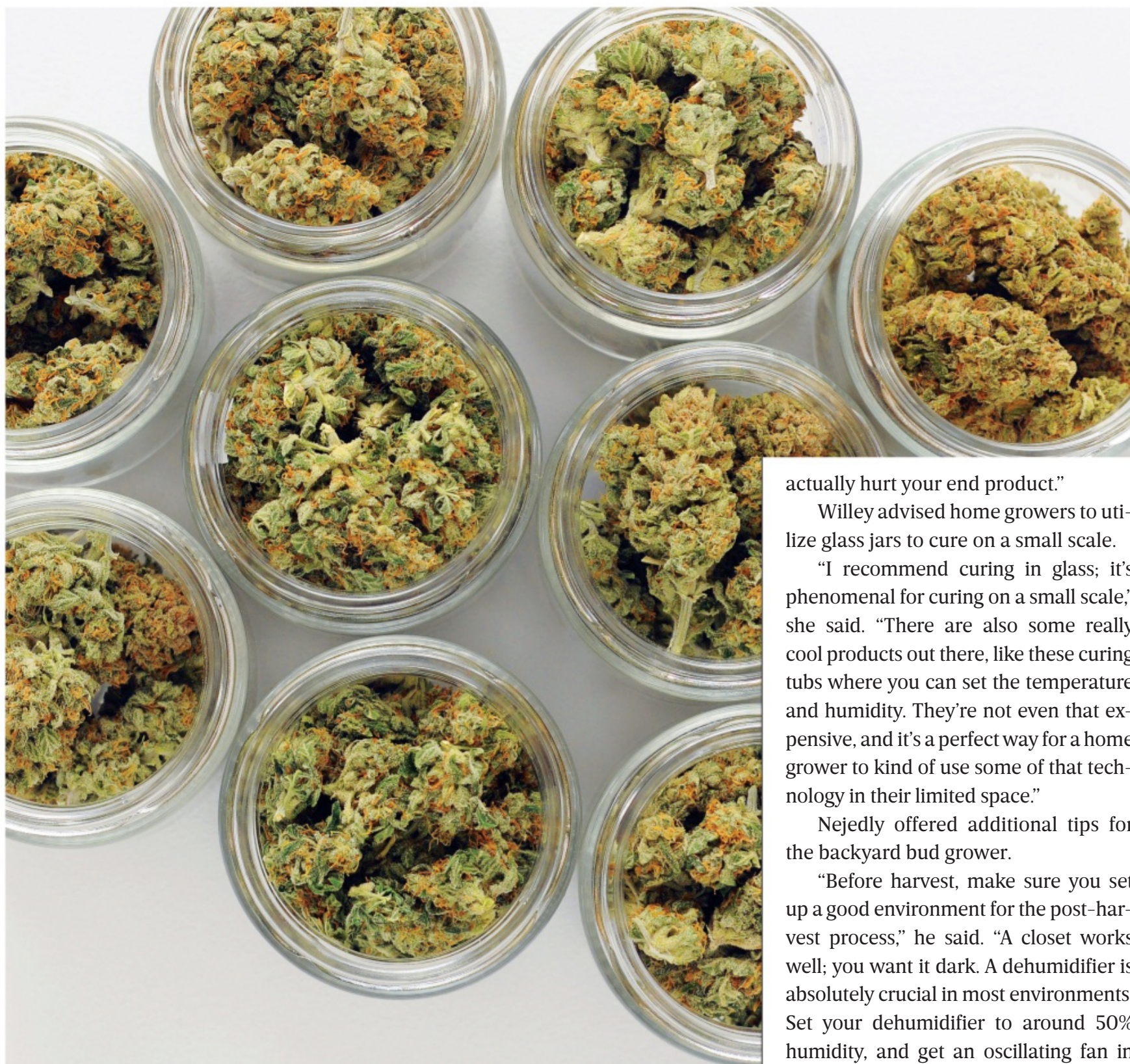
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Pro Advice for Home Growers

➤ The post-production process can be just as important—if not more so—for the home grower than it is for the large-scale commercial company that can afford potential mistakes in drying, curing and/or trimming. But for a modest marijuana cultivator, the yield needs

to be processed as perfectly as possible to make all the time, effort, and money expended worthwhile with a great end product.

“When growing in a home, make sure you have a climate-controlled area for your drying process; that you’re not just sticking it in a closet,” Willey advised. “Because even if you’ve done a great job growing the buds, if it’s not dried properly, the end-user is not going to be able to enjoy all the terpenes that come with properly drying and curing the product. Improper processes can also cause mold and things like that if your rooms get too humid or too hot during the dry/cure process, so you can

actually hurt your end product.”

Willey advised home growers to utilize glass jars to cure on a small scale.

“I recommend curing in glass; it’s phenomenal for curing on a small scale,” she said. “There are also some really cool products out there, like these curing tubs where you can set the temperature and humidity. They’re not even that expensive, and it’s a perfect way for a home grower to kind of use some of that technology in their limited space.”

Nejedly offered additional tips for the backyard bud grower.

“Before harvest, make sure you set up a good environment for the post-harvest process,” he said. “A closet works well; you want it dark. A dehumidifier is absolutely crucial in most environments. Set your dehumidifier to around 50% humidity, and get an oscillating fan in the space to get a slight breeze flowing across the plants. Keep it dark and cool, meaning under 70 degrees. After a week, see if the stems snap, and if so, on to trimming.”

Jamalian advised home growers to hang their harvest in a dark closet with a tiny computer fan or a clip-on fan running.

“Keep the buds on the hanger and nicely spaced so it has room to breathe and doesn’t mold,” he advised. “Check on it frequently to make sure it’s not developing any kind of dry rot. It’s all about environmental control; once it’s trimmed and cured, 4 to 5 millimeter mylar bags are really good for trapping terpenes.” >>

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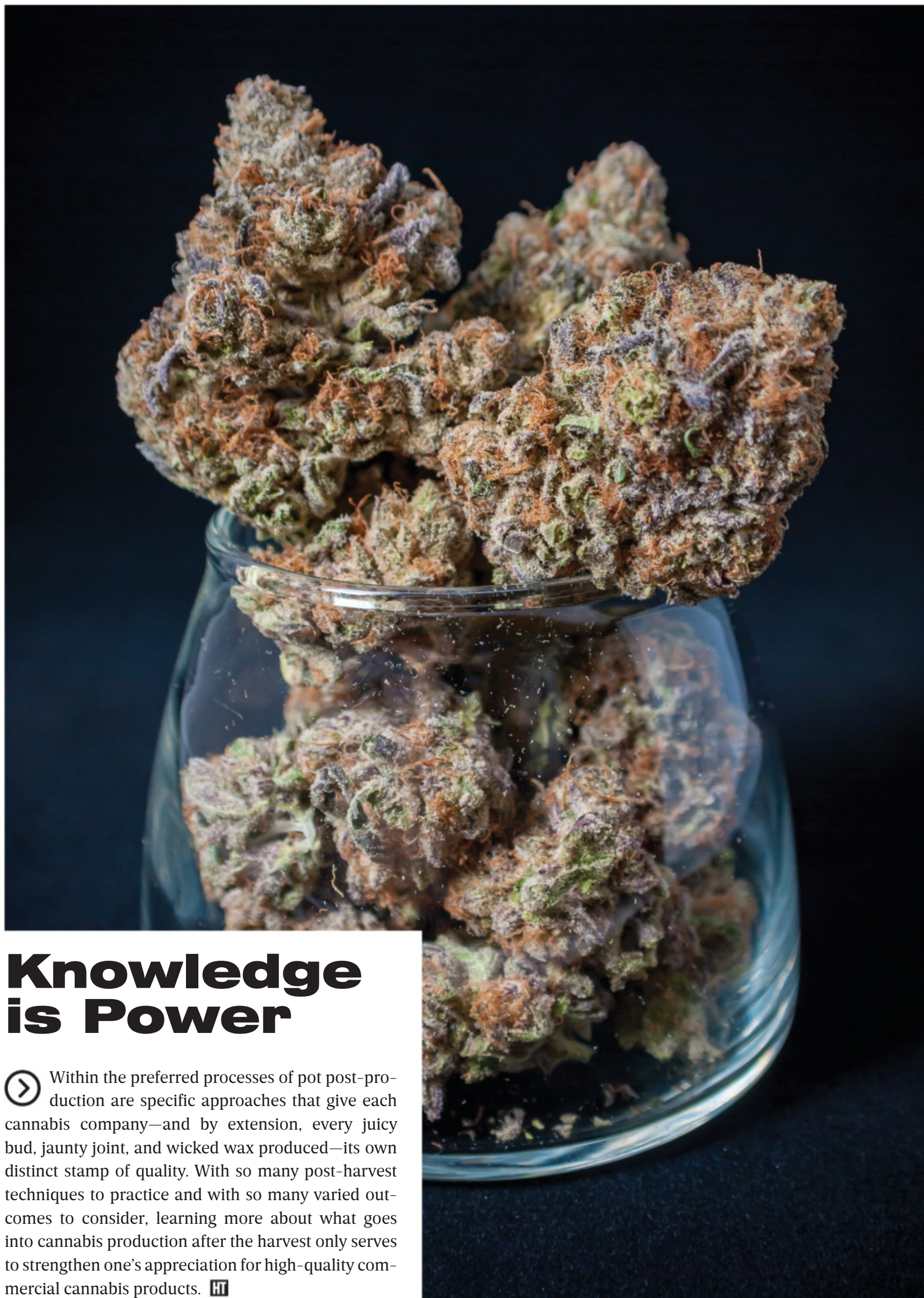
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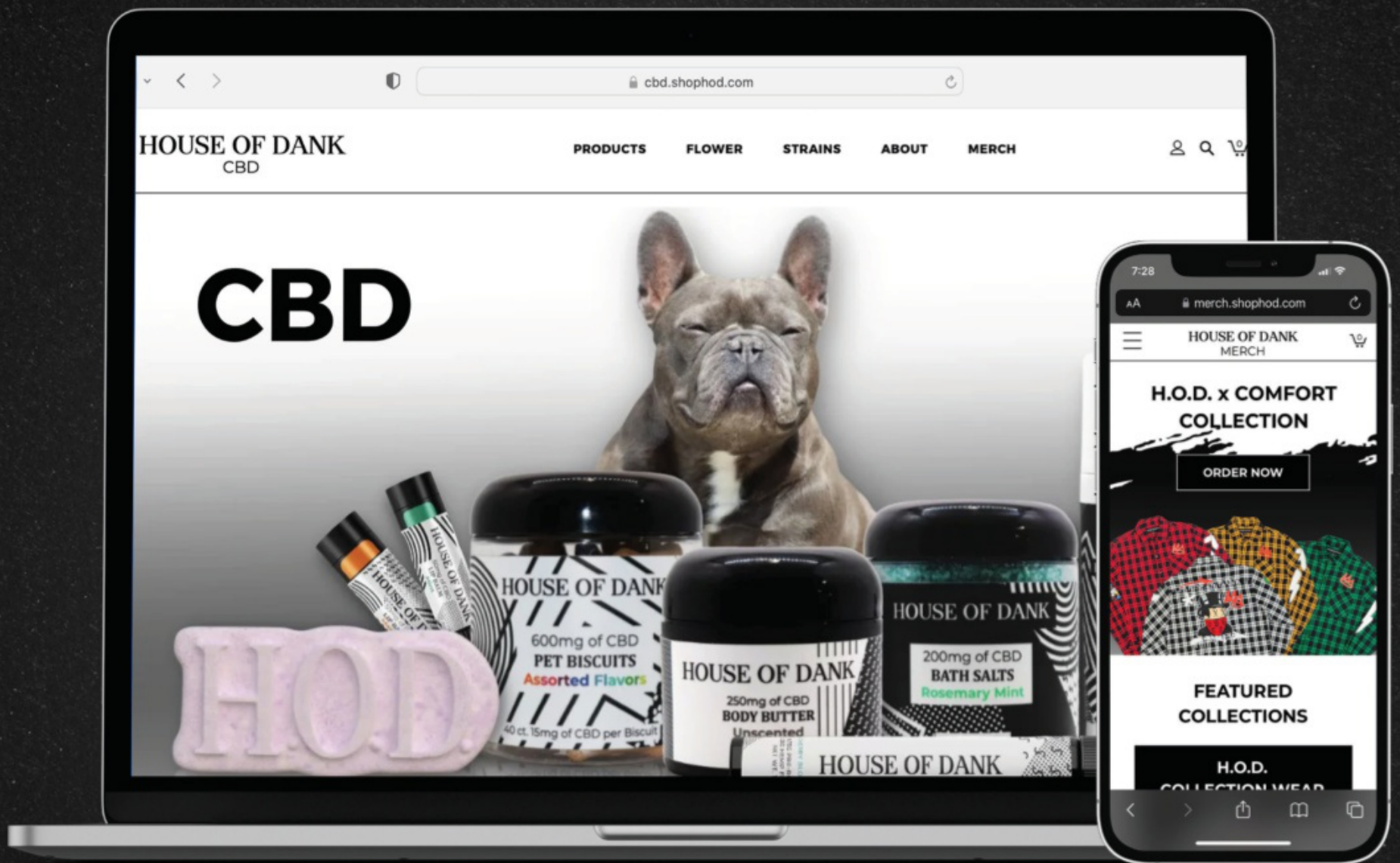


Knowledge is Power

➤ Within the preferred processes of pot post-production are specific approaches that give each cannabis company—and by extension, every juicy bud, jaunty joint, and wicked wax produced—its own distinct stamp of quality. With so many post-harvest techniques to practice and with so many varied outcomes to consider, learning more about what goes into cannabis production after the harvest only serves to strengthen one's appreciation for high-quality commercial cannabis products. **HT**

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following the spirit

Cannabis breeder Katie Jeanne finds harmony

// by Ellen Holland

Pink Boost Goddess.



"There's this belief that the more that you work closely with a plant, there's a consciousness within the plant and that plant gets to know you over time."

- Joseph Haggard

Cracking open a jar of Pink Boost Goddess is an olfactory wandering into a field of mint and not-quite-ripe strawberries. Terpinolene, a terpene found in the Jack and Haze strain families, provides a hint of orange rind alongside a woody floral aroma from the terpene ocimene. For Katie Jeane, this particular type of cannabis has continued to be a guide. Jeane has cultivated Pink Boost Goddess for the past seven years through her farm Emerald Spirit Botanicals and appreciates the insight it provides.

“What I’ve found is it helps me to go, in my life, into these kind of trickier, more challenging places and gives me a larger perspective to be able to find solutions,” she says. “That is unique for me, that this medicine offers that, and it offers it from a joyful place.”

Jeane, a former preschool teacher from Mendocino County, was called to work with the cannabis plant by her internal spirit guide. Following her “soul path” and listening to the insight she gained from beyond everyday consciousness led her to initially begin growing cannabis that was high in the cannabinoid CBD. After working with different cultivars (Dancing Sun, Equinox, Crystal Hope, and Harmony Rose) to bring them into a balanced 1:1 THC to CBD ratio, she was looking to explore other cannabinoids with unique medicinal properties and came across THCV.

THCV, or tetrahydrocannabivarin, has shown promise in animal studies for its ability to decrease appetite and speed up metabolism. These qualities mean the cannabinoid may help treat conditions like diabetes and obesity.

“THCV has been shown to restore insulin sensitivity in diet-induced obese mice models and reducing obesity by modulating the metabolic processes,” a 2020 study in the *Journal of Cannabis Research* reads.

Additional studies have also shown THCV has neuroprotective qualities and might be a promising therapy for delaying the progression of Parkinson’s disease. Unlike THC, which brings on the “high” associated with cannabis, a 2015 study in the *Journal of Psychopharmacology* shows THCV has a much more muted psychoactive effect.

“Because we were working with CBD there wasn’t necessarily this relationship to getting high like THC has, but [THCV] brings in gifts that cannabis has to offer in a different way,” Jeane’s son and business partner Joseph Haggard says. “I think what it’s doing for people is it’s bringing in a subtle difference in their cannabis experience. They’re not necessarily aware of what they’re missing, but they just like what it’s adding.”

Cannabis interacts with the endocannabinoid system so that our bodies can achieve homeostasis, or balance. Both Haggard and Jeane believe the best

way to use cannabis as a medicine is through balanced cannabinoid ratios.

“When you look at the endocannabinoid system—which is a system inside our body which is responsible for balance—it’s responsible for homeostasis,” Haggard explains. “And so if we’re going to feed that endocannabinoid system—and that’s what we’re doing by using cannabis we’re essentially supplementing that system—we want to be supplementing that system with balanced cannabinoid ratios. That’s kind of our intuition.” >>



PHOTO: ARMANDO APARICIO



◀ JOSEPH HAGGARD
HANGS BUDS FOR
DRYING AT THE
EMERALD SPIRIT
BOTANICALS FARM.



Cultivating a Goddess

Pink Boost Goddess is a cross of Black Garlic, Boost, and an unknown Goddess. The cultivar was created by Linda Lu and came to Jeane as a seed from friends. The first plants Jeane grew only had a small amount of THCV, but throughout the years she has bred the plant to show higher ratios of the cannabinoid.

With her plants now expressing as much as 11% THCV, Pink Boost Goddess has been recognized for its unique attributes. It won first place in the third-party certified sun-grown category of the 2021 Emerald Cup and took home the highest THCV content award and Regenerative Farm Award that year. In 2022, Pink Boost Goddess won the Emerald Cup's sungrown category again and was honored with a Gold Ribbon in the California State Fair Cannabis Awards unique category.

Pink Boost Goddess is a medium-sized plant with long branches that Jeane describes as “dancing arms” with a quality of flexibility and movement. The leaves are relatively narrow, and the buds have magenta and pink pistils and are generally ready for harvest after eight weeks of flowering.

▲ PINK BOOST GODDESS HAS BALANCED RATIOS OF THC AND THCV.

MANY TYPES OF FLOWERS BLOOM AT EMERALD SPIRIT BOTANICALS. ▼



“Of course, it’s really good medicine for many people, but it’s like a special gift to me, a special medicine,” Jeane says of her long-term relationship with the cultivar and her belief that the plant is repaying her for all the years of love and support.

Founded in 2015, the Emerald Spirit Botanicals farm is located in the Noyo River Watershed near Willits and is where Jeane lives with her son and his wife Catherine and Jeane’s other son, River. The area of the farm where the male plants are kept is called both the “vision quest garden” and “origin.”

“It’s in the forest in native soil. It’s more shady. [The male plants] don’t get as much water and care and whatnot; they’re much more in the wild,” Jeane explains. “In that place they’re much more connected, without interference, to the earth. Sort of like when you go out on a vision quest, you’re more connected to those rawer elements.”

For Jeane, keeping her male plants in this wild environment is a way for them to tune in to natural rhythms and “receive the gifts from the future or receive the gifts that need to come down for the future or to go out to the future.”

“The medicines are evolving on the planet,” she says, “and the medicines need to be evolving on the planet because we are evolving on the planet and the medicines are here to help us.” >>

LOCALGROVE

MICHIGAN



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PHOTO: DORIT THIES

▲ KATIE JEANE (SECOND FROM LEFT) IS JOINED BY HER SONS RIVER (LEFT) AND JOSEPH (RIGHT) AS WELL AS JOSEPH'S WIFE CATHERINE.

▼ NATURE'S CREATURES, LIKE THIS CALIFORNIA SISTER BUTTERFLY, THRIVE ON THE FARM.



"I definitely feel cannabis is a medicine and it needs to be respected."

– Katie Jeane

In accordance with honoring the medicinal properties of the plant, cannabis and other crops on the farm are grown with regenerative farming practices that align with natural systems and work to improve the environment.

"I definitely feel cannabis is a medicine and it needs to be respected and, you know, I want it to be honored and for me, it's honored when it's able to be in its natural environment which is in the earth and having sunlight shining on it," Jeane says.

For Haggard, growing outdoors is "harmonized with the larger cosmic rhythms that create the seasons." He says growing the male plants in the way they do at the farm allows them to develop the resilience and vitality of wild plants, important attributes to bring to the seed lot for future plantings.

"There's this belief that the more that you work closely with a plant, there's a consciousness within the plant and that plant gets to know you over time," he says of his mother's long-term work to refine Pink Boost Goddess. "And as you're growing and breeding and working with it because you're taking care of the plant, the plant, energetically, wants to be taking care of you." HT

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The Bird

"Gelato 33."

- Ryan, @freegrow8

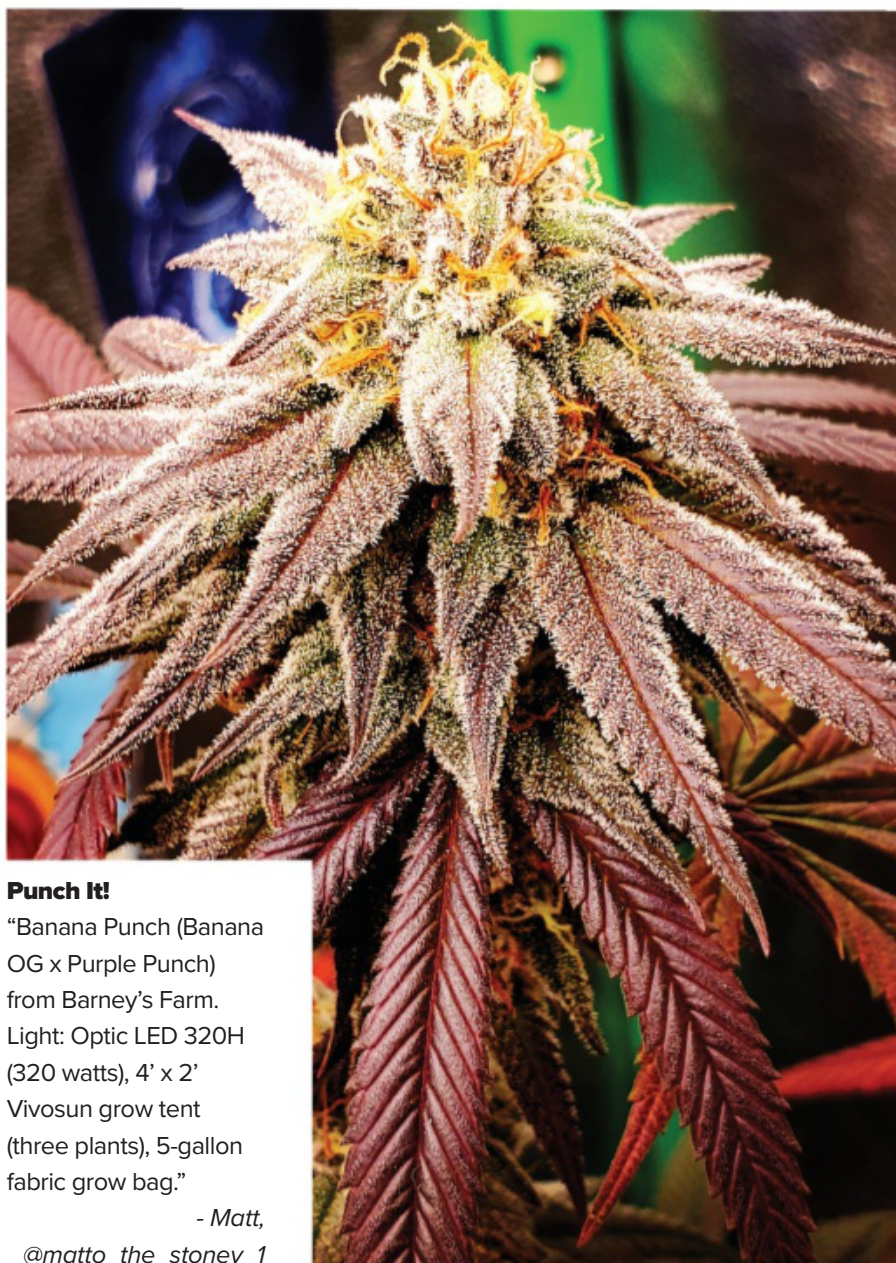


How Sweet It Is

"Don't it look delicious?"

Strain: Dosidos."

- Drew, @9smoke4



Punch It!

"Banana Punch (Banana OG x Purple Punch) from Barney's Farm.

Light: Optic LED 320H

(320 watts), 4' x 2'

Vivosun grow tent

(three plants), 5-gallon

fabric grow bag."

- Matt,

@matto_the_stoney_1



Walk Like an Egyptian

"Tutankhamun strain."

- Jason, @dronienoyce

JACK HERER



A photograph of a large indoor cannabis grow room. The room is filled with a dense canopy of green cannabis plants, many of which have small, developing buds. The plants are growing in a structured, possibly vertical, arrangement. In the bottom right corner, a white dehumidifier sits on the floor next to a black box fan. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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The Cold Cure

When applied to the cannabis industry, freeze dryer technology could very well become the future of drying and curing cannabis flower. While normal drying usually takes a couple of weeks, freeze drying could minimize that duration to a matter of days while still maintaining quality.

84

A Healthy Cigarette

In an original fictional short story written for *High Times*, Israeli author Etgar Keret writes about the plight of a veteran suffering from haunting memories of his time in the military, the tragedy of caring for his mother losing her own memories in old age, and the “healthy cigarette” that turns emotional and physical pain into welcome relief.



90

Vic Mensa Pays It Forward

Growing up in Chicago, hip-hop artist Vic Mensa believes that his strong support system of friends and family led to his musical success. From selling weed as a teenager to establishing Chicago’s first Black-owned cannabis brand that gives back to the local community, he has no plans to slow down.

104

Russell Peters Joins the Psychedelic Renaissance

Not only is Russell Peters a famed actor and comedian, but he’s also the chief creative officer of psilocybin truffle brand called Red Light Holland. In this interview, Peters shares all about this first experience with microdosing truffles and the psychedelic journey that followed.

112

Mama Sailene Promotes Health

Sailene Ossman, aka Mama Sailene, turned to cannabis after she was in a terrible car accident at 19 years old. Now she’s a famous figure in the cannabis community, having developed an underground cannabis delivery service and a traveling cannabis-infusion event club. Ossman has cooked with and for celebrities and offers recipes for infusing beverages and crafting mocktails in her book *CBD Cocktails*.

THE COLD CURE



**FREEZE DRYER TECHNOLOGY IS HELPING TO
SPEED UP THE DRYING AND CURING PROCESS.**

BY BENJAMIN M. ADAMS // PHOTOS BY JUSTIN CANNABIS



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“There are a series of benefits: energy efficiency, avoiding mold going through the process, and preservation.”

- Alejandro Cerdas



Developers are in the middle of a race to see how they can apply freeze dryer technology to dry and cure weed faster, taking a process that could have taken weeks into something that is pretty much instantaneous. Drying cannabis after it's harvested removes the moisture from the flowers so they can be properly smoked or vaporized and typically takes anywhere from 10 to 14 days. After that, the flowers are cured, a week to month-long process which removes additional moisture and helps preserve the buds and retain their flavor and potency. With freeze drying technology, what once could take weeks can be done in a day or within a matter of hours.

Typical drying and curing involves hang-dried buds, Mason jars, burping, and a whole array of commercial tools to make the finishing process possible, but freeze dryer technology is changing things fast. But does the process really work? Is the bud any good? Will more cannabis companies look to adopt this technology in the future? *High Times* checked in

with experts on this relatively new method for drying and curing. There are an array of differences in tools that can be used to dry, freeze dry, cure, or prepare for curing—with some, in particular, designed specifically for drying cannabis.

“It's a different technology,” Oaksterdam instructor Jeff Jones tells *High Times*, noting that the freeze-drying process to traditionally dried and cured cannabis is like comparing personal production preferences such as hand-trimmed weed versus machine-trimmed weed. The texture of the flower differs, but not really the size, potency, or nug structure.

Jones taught about the medical cannabis field in California for well over 20 years, co-founding the Oakland Cannabis Buyers' Cooperative (OCBC) in 1995 and helping to shape Oaksterdam. While he admits it's not the same as hang-dried cannabis and traditionally cured flowers, Jones believes there is a place for freeze-dried weed in the cannabis space.

Several companies are leading the charge toward finding the most efficient solutions to faster drying and curing periods. Avoiding hang-drying systems can also help mitigate other problems such as mold.

WAVE, a company building freeze dryer machines out of Vienna, Austria, is one of the companies utilizing this innovative technology. General manager of WAVE Freeze Dryers USA Alejandro Cerdas is a seasoned vet in the cannabis industry and says that freeze drying cannabis makes the post-production process more energy efficient and provides other benefits as well.

“There are a series of benefits: energy efficiency, avoiding mold going through the process, and preservation,” Cerdas says.

Each company we spoke to provides machines with different benefits, often using patent-pending technology. >>



WAVE'S FREEZE
DRYER TECHNOLOGY
IN ACTION.

THE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND FREEZE DRYING



Traditional freeze dryers work with cannabis by freezing the flower, then often reducing the pressure and applying heat to allow the frozen water in the bud to change directly to a vapor, i.e., sublimate. With this in mind, each company provides different processes.

“You basically start with your material and then that’s slightly frozen and then put under a vacuum, and basically sublimation occurs,” WAVE CEO Dan Berlin says. “The ice goes straight to vapor. It skims over the water phase. And we slowly raise the temperature through the process and gently remove water. And we’re trying to leave the flower at about 11-12% [moisture] when we pull it out—unlike traditional freeze drying when you go and take all the water out for when you have freeze-dried berries or things like that. With cannabis, we’re trying to

effectively cure it so that you don’t have to go through the whole drying and curing phase.”

Cryo Cure’s patented design, on the other hand, has several key differences from traditional freeze-drying methods—something the company likes to distinguish for people who are new to freeze-drying methods.

“We’re trying so hard to educate the public on the differences of freeze drying versus Cryo Curing because both utilize a freeze dryer, but the final results couldn’t be any more different,” Cryo Cure CEO Tracee McAfee says explaining that the system keeps more trichomes and terpenes intact than traditional freeze drying.

According to the company, the Cryo Cure system’s freeze temps and drying times are more fine-tuned to cannabis than similar products. Cryo Cure process is to freeze the cannabis or industrial hemp to -20 to -30 degrees Fahrenheit for no less than 10 hours to preserve the shape and integrity of the flowers, and select models have a built-in freezer for this purpose. The frozen product is placed into the material chamber under vacuum pressure, similarly to other freeze dryer models.

Keirton Inc. and Trichome Technologies combine the drying and extracting process in their machine while maintaining quality and preserving terps—launching Velos Cold Cure process and Velos Essence. Velos Essence can capture essential oils for use in vape cartridge flavors, edibles, beverages, fragrances, and pharmaceuticals.

“Velos Essence is a patent-pending process that we have on extracting terpenes, the full terpene profile, so monoterpenes and everything from fresh cannabis,” Keirton Inc. CEO Jay Evans says.

Terpenes are the chemical properties within cannabis that give the plant its taste and smell. These volatile hydrocarbons also play a role in pot’s effects and are classified by the number of carbons units they contain with monoterpenes containing two isoprene units.

“You get about an 80% extraction, so then that flower can be used for other extractions and the terpenes can be added in after extraction,” Evans explains. “So a lot of extraction processes, the monoterpenes are damaged. This pulls them all off organically.”

Velos also has a new product up its sleeve, which is still in development. Even burping, the process of allowing moisture and CO2 to escape during the curing process, can be automated.

“It’s called the Cure Puck,” Evans says. “It’s a device, and it’s not released yet, it’s a device that connects to a traditional bin or tote, that will automatically monitor the gasses inside of the tote, along with temperature and humidity, and burp the tote when those gasses reach a certain level.” »

ALEJANDRO
CERDAS PULLS
OUT TRAYS FROM
A WAVE FREEZE
DRYER.



SAVING TIME & IMPROVING EFFICIENCY



“We can take post-harvest drying from traditionally 10-14 days, or 10-20 days depending on how it’s done, to one day.”

- Jay Evans

The final cure using freeze dryers takes 24 hours or less—nearly all the companies we spoke with provide similar timetables, ranging from about 12-24 hours. Using the technology usually means money for businesses trying to improve efficiency. Getting bud from harvest to the finished stage can now be completed within a matter of days.

“It could be two or three days maybe, you know, and then it can get packaged,” says Cerdas. “It doesn’t need much of the [normal] process.”

But you can’t always expect the same results from a freeze dryer system unless the settings are set to

the specific needs of cannabis flower as you don’t want them to dry out as much as other traditionally freeze-dried materials.

“Traditional freeze-drying methods, even by using freeze dryers, work as long as they can be controlled—if you know the right parameters, so it preserves the terpenes,” said Greg Baughman, who co-founded Cryo Cure with McAfee. “So in a nutshell, what we do is we are able to skip the hanging phase of drying and you go right into a final cure. So our machine replaces that seven to two weeks of hanging, drying in a room and takes that down to between 12 and 16 hours, depending on the density of the cultivar.”

Traditional freeze dryers are designed to remove all of the moisture—not what we want for smokable flower.

“So that’s where our secret sauce lies, is that we’ve dialed in the perfect recipe to make sure that you don’t remove all any of the terpenes and all of the moisture,” Baughman says. “We started realizing that there’s not that many people who manufacture refrigerators out there in the selection. You know, we went through every single manufacturer and they’re all made for different things and they specialize in different industries.”

If a person uses a traditional freeze dryer, they’re not going to be designed specifically for batches of cannabis flower. And companies like Cryo Cure have mitigated many of these problems already to become more cost-effective purchase for growers.

“Downtime equals dollars,” Baughman says.

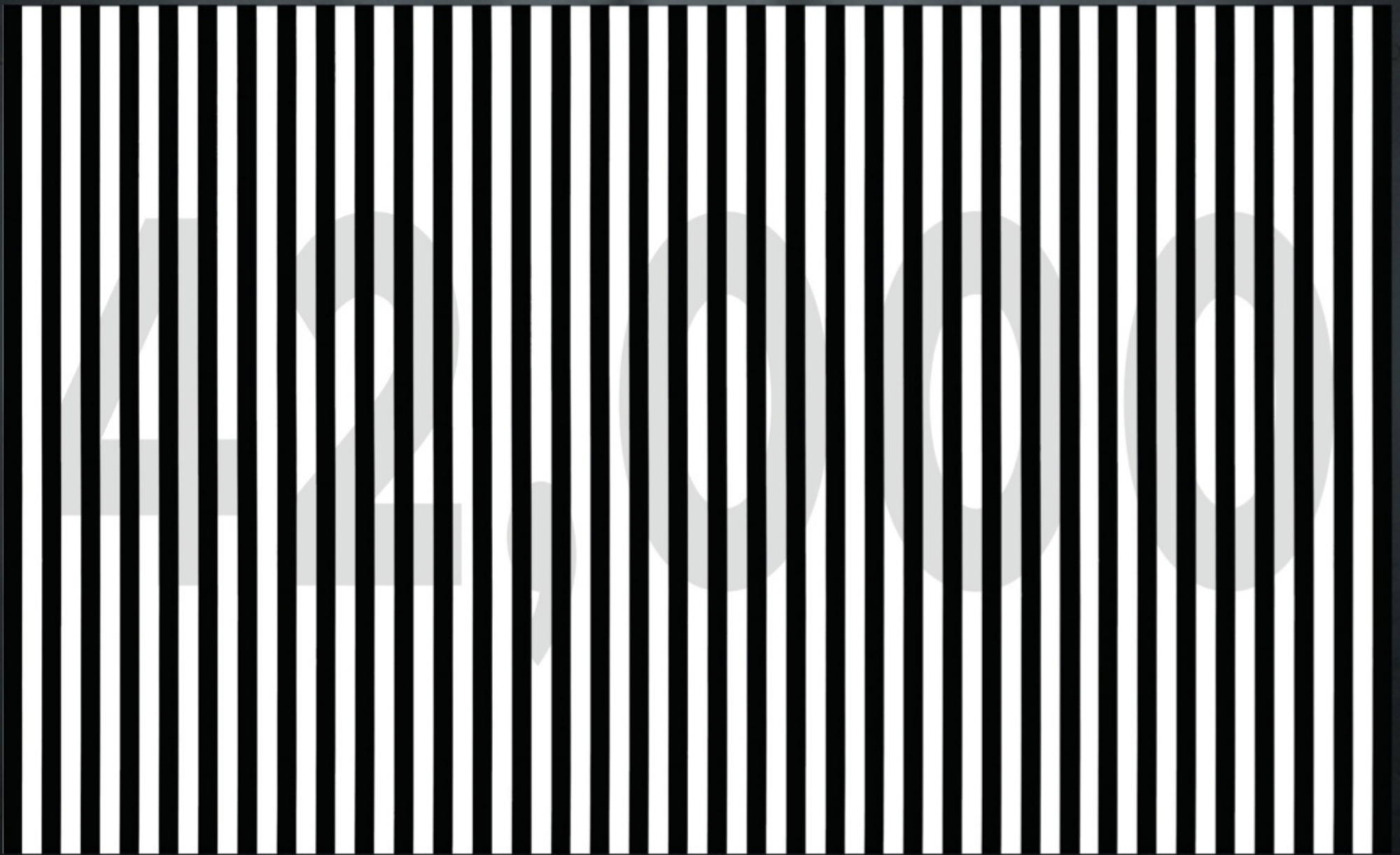
The Velos Cold Cure process offers a similar timetable, marking potentially huge improvements in efficiency.

“We can take post-harvest drying from traditionally 10-14 days, or 10-20 days, depending on how it’s done to one day,” says Evans. >>



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WHAT'S THE BUD LIKE?



While the size of the buds stays the same, some say that the texture is slightly different. The freeze-dried flower can range from a light popcorn texture and weight to being almost indistinguishable from hang-dried cannabis. The flower's quality depends on which machine and process you decide to use. Cerdas says WAVE is not simply freeze drying the flower because freezing the flower creates irreparable damage to the cell walls.

Typical freeze drying will “eventually produce a flower that has a look and feel like popcorn, and it will crumble,” he explains. “With that damage comes the horrible issue of losing a big amount of terpenoids through the cold boil produced by the combo of vacuum and temperature.”

Cerdas prefers to call his cannabis “sharp dry” instead of freeze dried.

“Basically, the sharp dry flower feels, smokes, and behaves very similar to regular hang-dried flower,” he says.

The difference in texture might not be as important to everyone, particularly those whose primary interest is keeping cannabis fresh for as long as possible.

“What I can say about this freezing is that it's not going to capture 100% of the market, but it will have a niche much like Folgers Coffee and any processing materials for shelf-ready

storage,” Jones says. “Because if you wanted to put this material into your bug out bag and have it for two years, I'm not going to call my herb that I just put myself there good because it's not going to taste good. It's going to be totally stale and the consistency will shift.”

WAVE's freeze dryer models also appeal to extraction artists because the texture of the original flower does not matter so much.

“We have some folks using the equipment for bubble hash in the extraction business,” Cerdas says. “And that's always interesting because the benefit it will bring in is completely different from what has happened in the past: As I mentioned, we've not found a way of using the equipment without using the conventional freeze drying process—which we found damages the flowers. And you get that weird taste and feel that people really don't like.”

Others agree with the difference in texture, but consider it to be better.

“There's definitely a difference: number one, the color and the look is much better than traditionally dried flower,” Cerdas says. “The terpene profile is often better. The thing that traditional customers are not used to is the texture. It's different.”

One perk of freeze-dried cannabis is its

“Traditional freeze-drying methods, even by using freeze dryers, work as long as they can be controlled if you know the right parameters, so it preserves the terpenes.”

- Greg Baughman

ability to be stored for long periods of time.

“It's got to be kept in a lightproof and airtight container and it'll last a long time,” Cerdas says. “We have some samples that we've had in the cupboard for about three years. It looks just the same. We take little pieces off. Yeah. Whenever we have customers that come over demos, we pull it out and we said, you know, like, ‘Wow, that's good.’ And again, that's two years old!”

It remains to be seen how the consumer marketplace will react to freeze-dried cannabis, but the benefits in terms of saving time on the producer's end are undeniable. 

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A HEALTHY CIGARETTE

by Etgar Keret

Sometimes I wonder how many of the people I know have ever killed someone.

I'm not talking about murder. I mean, how many of them have run someone over, or left a baby in a car, or accidentally given Grandma the wrong medication. It must be a big number. After all, heaps of people die all the time. And someone's killing them. Not all of them, but at least a few. And yet when I think about everyone I've known in my forty-odd years on this planet, I can't come up with a single one besides myself who's killed someone. Maybe the killers keep it under wraps, or they just don't think about it all the time like I do. Maybe for them, the whole episode was just something that happened a long time ago and it's not on their mind anymore—like a stag party, or hernia surgery, or a mediocre backpacking trip to the Far East.

I don't know the name of the man I killed. He was a Syrian soldier and I was an Israeli soldier and we were at war. I'm not saying that to excuse what I did, just to explain the situation. It happened in Southern Lebanon, at night. We were standing about twenty feet apart. He tried to shoot me first, but his AK-47 jammed. Then I tried to shoot him, and my rifle jammed too. I took the magazine out, cocked twice—and the chamber discharged a bullet. I put the magazine back in. All this time I was looking at the Syrian soldier, who was doing exactly the same thing. It was obvious that under the circumstances, with him so close to me, what I should have done is charge ferociously and clobber his skull with my rifle. I'm guessing he was thinking the same thing. But instead of lunging at each other, we kept clutching our jammed rifles as if they were life boards: something to hold the necessary

murderousness at bay, something that would allow us the luxury of being brutes by proxy instead of just brutes.

With the magazine back in, I cock my rifle and shut one eye so I can aim. The Syrian does the same thing. His one open eye looks fearfully straight at mine. I start to squeeze the trigger but the Syrian beats me to it by a split second. I hear the tap of his firing pin. His rifle is still jammed. Mine works. The sound is deafening. His face spurts blood. I wake up.

W

Whenever Rivi comes over for her regular check-ups, she asks my mother tedious questions like “What were your parents called?” or “How long have you lived in Israel?” or “What is the President's name?” Rivi says these questions are like a workout for the brain, but as an outside observer it seems to me that my mom's brain hasn't been in workout shape for a long time. On her last visit, Rivi asked Mom, “Do you remember what street you live on, honey? Do you know which city you live in?” like she was a little girl.

“Sort of,” my mom answered with a tender smile, “and you? Do you remember where you live?”

Rivi laughed and said she lived in Ramat Gan. Then she pointed to herself and asked Mom if she remembered her name.

“Ruthi?” Mom tried, “is it Ruthi?”

“You're close,” said Rivi, stroking Mom's pale hand, “very close. What about him?” She pointed at me. “Do you know who he is?”

Mom gave me an awkward look. “Him?” She shrugged her shoulders. “I know that I love him. Isn't that enough?” >>



Before leaving, Rivi asked to have a word with me privately. She said my mom's condition was deteriorating, she was worried, and I should take her to see a geriatric doctor. I tried to explain that Mom doesn't like going to the doctor, and that as far as I'm concerned the fact that she doesn't remember much is something of a blessing, because when you're a lonely widow with no grandchildren and your son is an unemployed loser, it's probably best not to remember. Rivi gave me a teacherly look and said that when I label myself as "an unemployed loser" I'm diminishing my existence, and that I have a lot more to offer. I asked what more I had to offer—not to pick a fight, but because I genuinely wanted to know—and she said that I'm a good person, a son who takes care of his mother, and that as a social worker she knows that's not always the case. "I know you went through a rough divorce," she added, "and that you have a mental health diagnosis, and that you experienced trauma in the army..."

"I killed someone," I countered, "that's not trauma, it's what soldiers are supposed to do. I even got a medal of honor."

"I know. Your mom told me there was a ceremony with the Chief of Staff and that—"

"I didn't go. Did she tell you that, too?"

"Yes, she did. She told me. I know pretty much everything about you, from preschool onward. Your mom likes to talk. But her cognitive abilities are declining. She needs to see a doctor."

After Rivi left, I made Mom some pancakes. Whenever I cook something good for her, she always wolfs it down, barely stopping to take a breath, as if I might

grab her plate at any second. "Slow down, Mom," I tell her, "relax, that pancake isn't going anywhere." But it's pointless. If she likes it, she scarfs the whole thing in a second. That's why I waited till Rivi was gone to give her the pancakes, so she wouldn't embarrass herself.

"What's the name of that lady who was here asking questions?" Mom asked.

"Rivi. Her name is Rivi. But it doesn't really matter."

"Yes it does," Mom said and looked up at me, "it does matter, and I'm sorry I forgot who you are. Sometimes my thoughts get mixed up, but it doesn't mean I don't love you."

"I know, Mom." I tried to smile, and I leaned over to kiss her warm cheek. "I know."

I

In the evening, I roll a "healthy cigarette" for Mom. That's our codename for a joint. She smoked her first one when she was eighty, a few months after I moved back in with her. Every evening we'd sit in the yard and smoke the lousy, gritty pot that Nathan, the neighbors' son, sold me for cheap. Mom always stressed about how the pot was going to destroy her short-term memory, and I always tried to figure out which of the things that had happened in the recent past she'd rather not forget: that my dad had dropped dead of a heart attack? That Dikla had

left me for a woman with Asperger's who designed products at her company? Or was it that I'd put on twenty-two pounds in seven months and now I looked like Mr. Potato Head?

As soon as mom started smoking, her mood always improved. Or maybe it didn't but the weed made me think it did. Once, she grimaced and shut her eyes and said, "All these pains are unbearable! Do you know which part of my body hurts most?" When I said I didn't, she gave me an apologetic, stoned look and asked me to remind her what we were talking about. "I was asking what you want for dessert," I said.

"Mmm... Do we have any ice cream?"

"Of course we do." I headed to the freezer, and presto—in the blink of an eye, the unbearable pain had turned into a tub of Cherry Garcia with M&M's on top.

"I'm sorry about today," Mom says, passing me the healthy cigarette, "maybe I really should see a doctor."

I take a drag. "Okay. I'll make an appointment. But first tell me who I am."

"You?" she says with a hurt look, "I know who you are." She falls silent, and I feel guilty again. You don't have to kill to feel guilty. Mom stammers, "You're... you're..." and bursts into tears.

I get up and hug her: "It's okay, Mom, don't worry about it. You remember that you love me and that I love you. Isn't that enough?" **HT**

Translated from Hebrew by Jessica Cohen

"Etgar Keret is a genius..."

— *The New York Times*

"A brilliant writer...completely unlike any writer I know. The voice of the next generation."

— *Salman Rushdie*

Etgar Keret (Hebrew: אֶתְגָּר כֶּרֶת, born August 20, 1967) is an Israeli writer known for his short stories, graphic novels, and scriptwriting for film and television.

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VIC MENSA

PAYS IT FORWARD

THE ROC NATION HIP-HOP ARTIST DISCUSSES PRISON REFORM, PROBLEMS WITH PHARMACEUTICALS, BENEFITS OF PLANT MEDICINE, AND EMPOWERING THE YOUTH.

By Stephen Laddin

Victor Kwesi Mensah—known professionally as Vic Mensa—is a man who fully embodies what it means to be an artist. He's got the drive, the spirituality, the sound, and most of all, the confidence. But how does one attain the knowhow to be a successful artist, let alone be successful at anything?

The answer lies in a strong support system. Mensa has been surrounded by supportive people for most of his life, dating back to high school where his band Kids These Days was drawing the eye of major record labels and prominent record producers. It was during these formative years that Mensa realized he had talent, honed his craft, and was propelled by the love and

support of family and friends to tap into his potential. That potential is now culminating with a second full-length album due out this fall, a record that's sonically rooted in hip-hop, jazz, and African music.

When we connect over Zoom, Mensa reveals more about his upbringing and how it helped shape the man he is today. He lays bare his longtime relationship with cannabis, morphing from a teen trying to sell pot he didn't possess, to owning a socially conscious weed company—93 Boyz—Chicago's first Black-owned cannabis brand, and how the intersection of weed, fashion, art, and music provided the bedrock for his ascension from a Chicago fresh kid to an inspiring artist kids can look up to. >>



High Times Magazine: Growing up in Chicago, did you always know you wanted to pursue music?

Vic Mensa: I was a skateboarder first from age 6. By the time I was in third or fourth grade, I was starting to choose my own music, and was more interested in rock and roll. So I started playing guitar when I was 10. After that, I started writing graffiti, and that was really my introduction to hip-hop.

I was climbing 15-story fire escapes, painting rooftops and jumping on train tracks to paint trains before I was technically in my teens. Zoo York was a big influence of mine and there was a Zoo York video—I think they called it the *Zoo York Mixtape*—that had some KRS-One in there, which was probably the first hip-hop that really resonated with me.

Did you have a particular style of graffiti art and/or skateboarding, and did that style evolve into what you were doing early on with music?

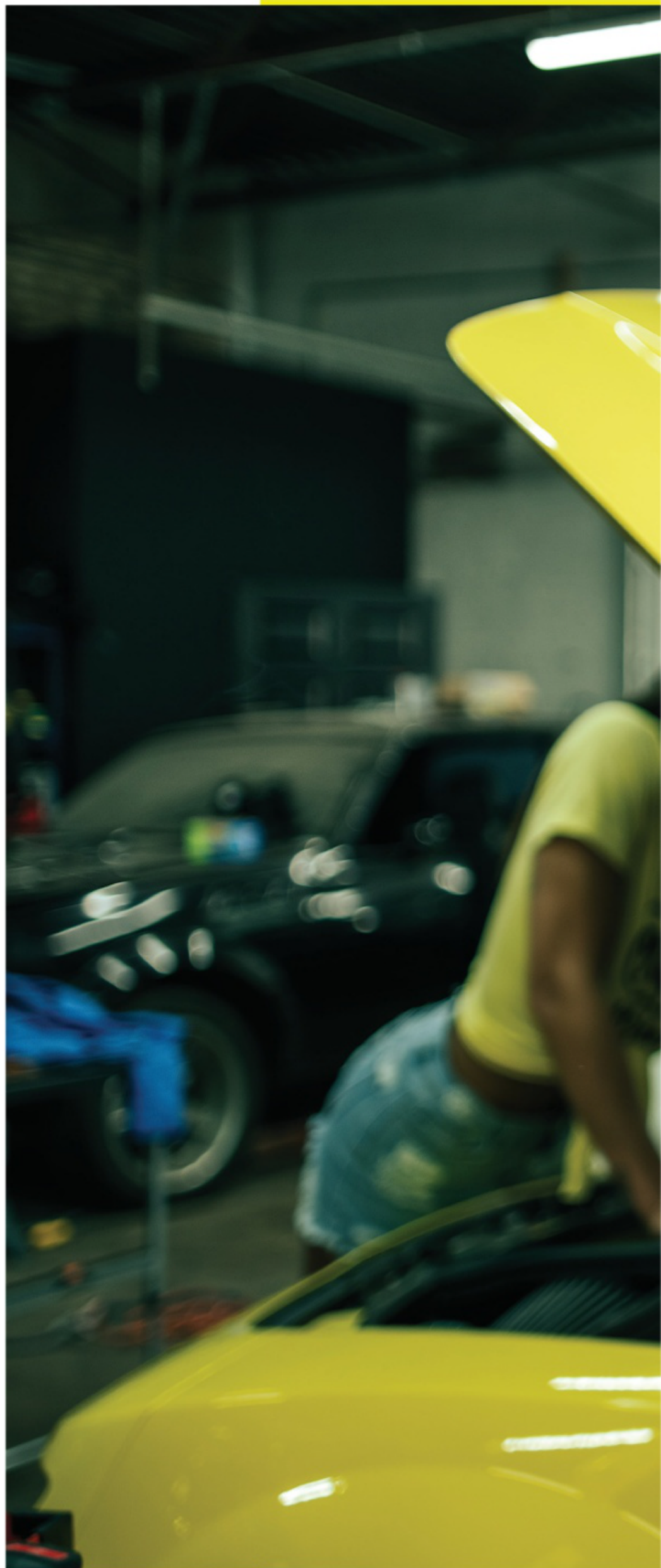
I think all of those things are intertwined because they're street culture and counterculture. As far as a particular style of graffiti art, in Chicago, we have a lot of styles but I think we're most known for straight letters, and I was influenced primarily by the Chicago graffiti legends. Straight, block letters, a kind of straight letter tag style. But I was also a student of the game from my earliest days. I was studying Los Angeles graffiti crews like MSK and New York guys like SKUF and Cope—all the OGs.

When I started to release and promote music, I was already familiar with traveling across the city promoting my name [through graffiti], even though at first it wasn't my real name. I'd do my own wheatpaste posters and shit like that when I was in high school. I mean, I'll still do a wheatpaste poster to this day, don't get it fucked up, but off top, I'd definitely be out on a street corner with the bucket and the posters, treating it like graffiti. Because in a way, graffiti is street marketing. A lot of the people that do street marketing for record labels are graffiti guys. So graffiti and skateboarding are my two primary stylistic inspirations.

So you're immersed in the graffiti world. Was there a moment when music suddenly became the primary focus?

Probably around freshman year of high school when I started to record. Just receiving positive feedback and reinforcement from people around me—not everybody, obviously, but from some people that I respected—did a lot for me. I recognized that I had a particular talent for writing rhymes, but you know man, honestly, I think one of the reasons why I focus myself on doing so much for the youth is because in the dawn of my youth, I know how much those votes of confidence did for me.

Like my big brother Dare who I have tatted on my wrist and who I've written a bunch of songs about—may he rest in peace. He was older than me—near my age now when I was a kid—and he brought me into Jam Crew, which was the primary southside Black graffiti crew and took me under his wing. He was like, "This my shorty, he's dope. He's dope in general." Nobody knew I could rap, but they were just showing me love, boosting my confidence, and giving me opportunity. As I found my own path in what I really wanted to do, I already had that network of older guys in the city who supported me and would let me rock stages when they'd have shows and stuff like that. >>







So your brother helped you see that you were dope in a particular way—just as a human—and then from that, you were able to grow into yourself musically from that sort of base.

One-hundred percent. Those same people who showed me love when I was a kid trying to dress cool and do graffiti and all of that shit—those same people when I picked up a mic or released music to this day still give me opportunities.

In Chicago, one of our primary forms of cultural currency and a hub of creativity came from the boutiques and sneaker stores. We had a shop called Leaders that's still around that was incredibly impactful to all of our upbringings, a place called Sir & Madame, which is also still in existence, and a place called PHLI. All of those places were these centers of inspiration, creativity, sneaker culture, art, hip-hip, and graffiti all at once.

Some of the first guys I knew who were heavy with weed, who were cutting edge, having the best weed and the most knowledge and information—all played into our existence as fresh kids from Chicago. We've always been involved with art, we've always been involved with fashion, we've always been involved with music, and we've always been involved with weed.

How did your relationship with the plant start and how did it evolve as you evolved as a human?

My relationship with cannabis began when I was 11. I was just like any other kid living in the city, sneaking out of my mom's basement to smoke in the middle of the night, before school, or after school. In those ways, I became very familiar with weed and trying to sell it. But the problem was, I didn't have any weed to sell!

So I was trying to sell all types of shit. I was trying to sell blunt guts in a bag to the kids at the private school down the street. I remember the first time I tried to sell some weed I was in seventh grade and had a dime of Reggie. I tried to take it across the way to the high school in the area and tried to sell it to one of my friends. He was like, "Damn, man. You ain't even got no mids?" I was like, "Man, this is all I got right now. You gonna buy it or not?"

As I got into high school, a lot of my big homies sold weed and I caught a couple plugs and became the guy with the specialty product. It was me and my boy Joey Purp—we had the best weed in the school and we'd pride ourselves on having cutting edge strains at the time. I really thought I was the man when I had Jack Frost, which was a Jack Herer cross strain. I'd be having the OG Kush, the Master Kush, some OG Master Kush. That was our thing, being at the cutting edge of our community as far as weed was concerned.

I used to go as far as bagging up my weed in Nike SB lace bags. For somebody I was trying to impress, I'd bag up an eighth of Jack Frost in the Nike SB lace bag and they'd be like, "Oh, this thing's fresh."

I honestly learned so much from selling weed. Selling weed was my first entrepreneurial pursuit. Before I was selling a mixtape or anything like that, I was selling weed. To make it to school on time, I had to get up and bag up mad early. Sometimes people would want to shop super late, so I'd need to stay awake. I had to be punctual—or as punctual as a weed man is—but I'm just a punctual person in general. In those ways, selling weed provided the building blocks for my understanding of work ethic, and through selling weed, I funded all of my first music projects, purchased all of my studio time, paid for all of my music videos—everything. Cannabis enabled me to be in the studio and to express myself. >>

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IMPORTANT
TO ME AND
HAS PLAYED
A BIG ROLE
IN MY
DIFFERENT
JOURNEYS
AS A HUMAN
BEING."**

- VIC MENSA





When it got you into the studio, was there a moment or set of experiences where it became clear that music had taken over and was going to be your main path?

The moment when I sort of stopped everything else was when I got robbed, as a high schooler selling weed inevitably does. I was hustling serving guys who were way older than me—guys in their 20s who had newborn babies but were shopping with me buying quarters and halves daily—and I'm just a little ass kid. Eventually, I did get set up and robbed and lost a laptop with a bunch of important music on it. But around that same time, my father was really supportive of my music shit and was sometimes giving me money to go to the studio. So I just kind of fell back, you know?

It was the same way with graffiti. We kept getting arrested and eventually that was just in the way because music was starting to support itself. Everything else became ancillary—graffiti, hustling—things that were not my primary focus anymore—and I dove into music headfirst.

As you started to hit a certain level professionally, was there a “good omen” like in the *Alchemist* book that made you feel entrenched in music?

I was in a band in high school and we were performing at SXSW and different festivals courting all of the major record labels. In fairness, a lot of that was people reaching out to me, but I was loyal to the band. People loved the band as well, don't get me wrong, but No I.D. reached out early on and was rocking with me so much that he was like, “I'll check the band out.” The real life attrition was there, and this was the blog era, too, so we were getting love on all the blogs—2DopeBoyz, iLLRoots—and building relationships with all of those people. Even before music was paying anything, it was already real in high school and we were building a grassroots fanbase. We were selling out 1,500-person venues in Chicago when we were 16

and 17, so pretty quickly, the music became real.

I personally already had an understanding of grassroots marketing and communication from graffiti and hustling, so I'm selling tickets in the hallway the same way I'm selling dope, you know? Maybe at the same time. I'm putting up posters and stickers all over the city the same way I was just busting tags. On top of that, we were just making good music. The music became a clearly viable pathway pretty quickly.

Throughout your career, you've been outspoken about psychedelics and mental health. When did you start to understand the benefits of psychedelics and did they play a role in your success?

I got into psychedelics when I was 18 or 19. The first day I ever took shrooms I was sleeping on my manager-at-the-time's couch and Chance [The Rapper] came over and he had a hook and a verse for a song that would become *Cocoa Butter Kisses*. I took the mushrooms, went into the other room, started writing my verse, and just caught a spirit. It was like, “Whoa, this is different.”

From there, I was taking mushrooms constantly in the making of that album called the *INNANETAPE* and [mushrooms] became a real part of my lifestyle. Throughout my life, plant medicine has been important to me and has played a big role in my different journeys as a human being. I chilled out on shrooms for a while after [*INNANETAPE*] because I had just overdone it.

The ways in which I've used mushrooms in recent years have been in a microdosing capacity and in a much more healing capacity. I started taking antidepressants when I was 15. I started seeing psychiatrists at that same age—therapists shortly after—and in the last 14 years, I've taken over 10 antidepressant medications. In that same time period, I'd probably had one year when they were effective, which is a dismal efficacy rate. >>



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I've found that plant medicine has just been far more impactful to me in addressing my mental health than pharmaceuticals have, and I think the pharmaceutical industry is scared shitless about the potential for disruption that all of these different medicines present.

It's like you start taking [pharmaceuticals] and you think that it's helping because if you miss a couple of days you're like, "Oh shit, I'm really bad, I'm suicidal now." Then you remember you were never suicidal when you started taking the medication! The medicine is making me dependent on it. I was struggling when I first started taking it, but I wasn't trying to kill myself. When you're dealing with some of these plant medicines, you're getting a more straight deal.

In the best moments, I think [plant medicine] can help move inhibition. Creativity is not of man in its purest form. It's given to us from whatever you believe is above us. If it's God or it's Allah or the universe or the ancestors—at the end of the day—I believe we're all just a vessel for a more powerful, divine energy. In the best moments of our creativity, we're the most uninterrupted sacral. It's like a radio, and [plant medicine] can help you pick up [the frequency]. They can help pick up the signal.

I'm learning more how to harness things as tools, but to train myself to be the primary influence. These days, I stray away from relying on being under the influence of anything other than myself. That doesn't mean I won't ever have external influences, but I work on my meditation a lot. Meditation has been the most powerful tool for me in addressing my mental health.

I've been meditating since I was 16, and in recent years, my meditation has become far more consistent and more extensive. I've learned more techniques, I've been on five-day silent meditation retreats, and I've studied different meditations from different places in the world. In terms of cannabis, some of its traditional uses were as a meditative tool. People think of Rastafarianism as a happy-go-lucky "by the beach, mon," lackadaisical idea. In reality, those Rastas are vegan, deeply spiritual, deeply meditative, deeply revolutionary, and they meditate with the ganja. Meditation is my medicine above all.

If I haven't meditated in a day, I find myself getting aggravated over little things I can't control. Meditation is my first line of defense.

The paradox is that sometimes you'll need a plant medicine experience to understand that you *don't need* plant medicine to get to an elevated place.

There are breathing exercises and meditations you can do that will get you as high as any weed or psychedelic spirit medicine. One of my favorite things these days is to microdose mushrooms and complete an hour-and-15-minute-long meditation from a book by Dr. Joe Dispenza. I usually don't do guided meditations because I like the practice of disciplining myself, but the meditation in this book *Breaking The Habit of Being Yourself* is so wicked that it's like being on an astral plane. When I microdose, I'm taking non-psychoactive doses, which helps me tap into my internal power. >>



"THE WAYS IN WHICH I'VE USED MUSHROOMS IN RECENT YEARS HAVE BEEN IN A MICRODOSING CAPACITY AND IN A MUCH MORE HEALING CAPACITY."

- VIC MENSA



In January, you had an incident with psychedelics that made headlines. How did it go down?

I was headed to Ghana for about a month and I'd decided to get off my antidepressant medication. For the past few years, I've been dabbling with microdosing, but not really in the most consistent way. I had that experience that I mentioned previously where I had recently started taking a new antidepressant, took a few days off and started to feel suicidal. But I then realized I wasn't suicidal when I'd started taking the medication, and decided to get off of it.

So I was off to Ghana and was going to quit the antidepressant cold turkey. I was going to get on a real microdosing regimen, not have a drink when I got there, and take this step for my mental health. I reached out to a couple different companies just to get the right microdose of shrooms and they sent me a bunch of shit. Pretty carelessly, I threw it all in my bag and took off.

I had a great experience there, no issues getting off of the antidepressants. All of the microdosing was cool and I just put all the shit back in the bag, wasn't thinking too hard about it, and then I ended up going to jail.

In all honesty, what I had on me probably added up to an eighth of shrooms and a single tab of acid—which was an LSD microdose—so the entire bottle was one dose. It was a very miniscule amount of psychedelics in big packaging. But I was in such a cool place in my mind, had been meditating a ton, and was in such spiritual alignment that I wasn't stressed.

I've been working with a lot of folks recently in the prison release space and was actually able to help a friend of mine come home 12 years early on a 25 year sentence in 2020. So at the end of the day, being involved in clemency processes and legal processes for bringing other guys home made being in jail for a couple days—especially with the perspective that I have of these friends who are living years of their life in prison—a miniscule experience.

My meditations also gave me a brilliant edge in there, to the point where I was just

meditating the whole time to avoid thinking negatively. I'd come in front of the bail court and she was like, "Yeah, we're going to move your court date to three months from now." It's those things that will make your mind want to freak out, but I was in a place of real alignment, so I wasn't stressed and decided to see things as a blessing in the form of a lesson, and was like, "I'm going to get into the psychedelic game, too!"

At this point, the medical and health benefits are undeniable.

The actual, tangible, biochemical serotonin levels in your mind are boosted. It's like the laws of this nation are proven time and time again to be ineffective at meeting the needs of the people. The people are sick, are in constant fear and danger of gun violence, are poorly fed nutritionally, and the laws of this nation are incapable of addressing any solution to those many needs. So sometimes, you gotta go to jail for some shit that's stupid.

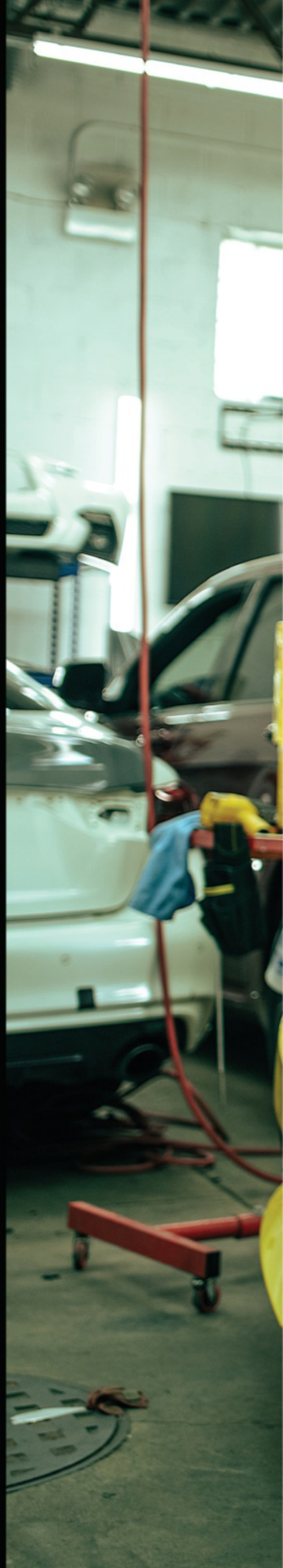
In May, I launched the first Black-owned cannabis brand in Chicago, Illinois—93 Boyz. We're in quite a few dispensaries and are rapidly expanding. We all know what the War on Drugs has done to Black and brown communities, but it still stands that our representation in the industry is miniscule. So we're taking steps to change that.

Our brand is standing on high quality and cutting edge genetics in a market that doesn't really have that yet. Also baked into our ethos is that a portion of all of our proceeds are going to community driven efforts. And that's what 93 Boyz is all about: Tastemaker weed mixed with socially minded initiatives.

Our first project that we're launching in August with the release of our full strain portfolio is a project called Books Before Bars. We're putting over one-thousand books into Illinois jails and prisons. This is an idea I had from my own experience sending literature to people in prison and seeing how their entire life experience can be—and has been—shifted by reading the right books. If you can't attain freedom yet in the physical, you can get it in the mental while you're still in the cage. **HT**

 **vicmensa.com**

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.







THE ACCOMPLISHED COMEDIAN SHARES
THE STORY OF HIS FIRST PSYCHEDELIC
TRIP AND GETTING A CONTACT HIGH IN THE
STUDIO WITH RAEKWON AND THE GAME.

RUSSELL PETERSON JOINS THE PSYCHEDELIC RENAISSANCE

BY ALI LERMAN

**“I’M NOT MUCH OF A SMOKER OR DRINKER,
AND THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I TRIED
SOMETHING OTHER THAN WEED, SO I THINK
I WAS EXPECTING ALL OF THESE CRAZY
THINGS TO HAPPEN. I DID GIGGLE A LOT.”**

-RUSSELL PETERS



WA may have mentioned something about not getting high on your own supply in the song *Dopeman*, but when you’re the chief creative officer (CCO) of Red Light Holland, a brand of magic truffles, all late ’80s rap song advice goes out the window.

Red Light Holland is an Ontario, Canada-based psilocybin truffle company that produces and sells magic truffles on the Dutch market. While the Netherlands banned the sale of hallucinogenic mushrooms in 2007, many smartshops still sell magic truffles. Both contain the active psychedelic component, psilocybin, but grow differently. Magic truffles grow underground, and mushrooms grow above ground.

When CEO and former broadcaster Todd Shapiro started Red Light Holland, he assembled a knowledgeable team. This included a wild card, his comedy veteran friend Russell Peters. When he joined the team, Peters had not tried micro-dosing with psilocybin truffles before. Apparently, instead of partaking in psychedelics, Russell was busy putting out comedy specials, touring his punchy observational stand-up worldwide, acting, and winning countless awards like a Peabody and an International Emmy for the documentary series *Hip-Hop Evolution*, which he co-produced, and was named Canadian Comedy Person of the Year. No biggie. When Peters stepped into his role at Red Light Holland as CCO, he soon realized there was no time like the present and became a client of the psychedelic experience.



High Times: How did you and Todd hook up for Red Light Holland?

Russell Peters: Todd Shapiro is a friend that I've known for a while from when he did radio. I'd do radio with him when I could, and we just kept in touch. He asked if I wanted to get involved, and I told him I didn't know much about it all. I really never looked into it because I had never done it. He told me that's why he wanted to get me involved and that I could use my creative mind with the marketing. It sounded exciting and interesting, so I wanted to learn more. It was as simple as that.

What made you want to try magic truffles for the first time at this stage in your life?

Being that I'm the CCO of Red Light Holland and people had been asking me so many questions about the product that I had no answers to, I felt like a fraud and didn't want to be the guy like, "Oh yeah, this is great," without being able to back it up. It seemed a little "money grab-ish" to me, and I don't like how

that looks, sounds, or seems. I needed to make sure I knew what the fuck I was talking about. I still don't claim to be an expert, having only done it once. At least I can say I tried it, I enjoyed it, and I'm willing to do it again. We're placed in Amsterdam, so you can get our stuff there. It's really starting to move, and I'm hoping more people get on board!

Did you go into it looking to get something specific from it?

It's funny because I expected way more. Eddie (assistant/tour manager) did it with me, and he got way more out of it even though we did the same amount. For me, I knew I was high, but it's a strange thing because you're aware that you're high. Like, "Oh! I'm high!" It's not like a goofy thing though, where you are like, "Hey dude! I'm so high." More so like, "I'm high and none of this is real." It was wild. I'm not much of a smoker or drinker, and this was the first time I tried something other than weed, so I think I was expecting all of these crazy things to happen. I did giggle a lot. >>





For newbies who want to giggle too, would you say being monitored is the way to go when you try microdosing for the first time?

I think a monitored experience would be a really smart way to start. At least that's what I did. I did mine, for lack of better terms, with a shaman when I was in Amsterdam. We used Red Light Holland products, and he gave me fresh truffles that were literally picked that morning. Truffles grow underground, and throughout Holland, cultivation is legal because you can control the product's growing process. (Europe is bound by a "single market act," and there is no specific order against psychedelic truffles, making sale, transportation, and possession legal.) For whatever reasons, they make their reasonings. The earth grew it, but we're telling you no! Anyway, Eddie and I both mashed up our own truffles, we poured this portobello mushroom broth he made over it, and then we drank it. It was like eating a really good mushroom soup.

Sounds like a nice start. How'd your trip go from there? Any stand-out moments?

I've always been highly self-aware, and when I did my trip, there was one part where I saw myself dead. But it wasn't a scary thing or an epiphany or anything. It was just like I was floating above and below I could see all of my friends and family crying and upset. Then I see me dead, but I don't actually see my face. I just knew it was me. Same thing with my family and friends; I couldn't see their faces. The one face I could see, which I thought was a little trippy, was Crazy Legs from Rock Steady Crew. Crazy Legs and I are very good friends now, but when I was a kid, I completely idolized him. I had posters on my wall, and to me, he optimized what cool was because I was a break dancer. So here we are, 40-something years later, and we're friends. It's a bizarre thing. Anyway, I see myself dead and Crazy Legs is running away from my body trying to get someone to help me. As I'm floating away, I'm like, "What are you doing? I'm already dead! Stop crying. It's not that bad! I'm OK!" >>

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HIGH TIMES



WINNER



Do you think your subconscious was telling you that you've accomplished some cool shit and if you should die, your family will be taken care of by Crazy Legs?

Yeah, right? The shaman said, "You seem very comfortable with death." I'm like, yeah, it doesn't bother me. I'm laughing like, see you guys later! It was pretty wild. I had a great trip. I really did have a good time.

OK, so your truffle experience was awesome, yet milder than what you imagined. What was your expectation the first time you smoked weed versus how it really went down?

The first time I smoked weed was in the mid-'90s. I thought, "Oh man! I'm going to smoke some weed and see all of these little green men, and it's going to be wild and holy shit!" I remember taking a drag off of my friend's joint outside of a restaurant, and all I did was cough. I was like, "Well, this sucks," and I went home. I didn't realize I was high when I went home. I put on the TV and stared at it for many hours. When I snapped out of it, I realized that I had

been watching a commercial for Dr. Ho's Muscle Massager. I watched an infomercial for like three hours!

Did you eat anything while watching TV high and not knowing it for three hours?

No, but another time, maybe three years ago, Raekwon was hanging out at my house. He was like, "Yo Russ, I need to go to the studio with the Game. You wanna come?" I'm like, "Yeah, I'll go!" I get there, and Raekwon and Game are in the studio, but there are all of these other people hanging out in there too, and the room was fucking thick with smoke. I got hotboxed but didn't realize it because I was just sitting there. Then Raekwon gets in the booth, and I have this moment where it's like, you forget they're legendary because they become a normal person to you. Then they go and do what makes them legendary, and you're like, "Oh shit! That's Raekwon from Wu-Tang Clan!"

Please tell me that you were so high that you asked to spit a couple of bars.

Yeah, no. But I thought about it! What happened is that he finished, came and sat down, I told him how dope it was, and then I had to go to the bathroom. As I'm walking down the hall, I see this catering room with three pizzas there. I ate all three fucking pizzas. I just stood there eating it like, "Is this the best pizza I have ever had in my life?" Then I realized after, "Holy shit, I'm high!" People started coming out of the studio, and I'm like, "Oh fuck, I need to hide these boxes!"

I can't wait for Game and Raekwon to read this article because, of course, they will and then send you a pizza bill.

Worth it. It was really great pizza. Or I was accidentally high. 



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EDIBLES



MAMA SAILENE PROMOTES HEALTH



Sailene Ossman's book provides recipes to craft CBD mocktails.

by Sharon Letts

CALIFORNIA CANNABIS PATIENT SAILENE

Ossman's journey with the plant came after a horrific car accident when she was just 19 years old. Her injuries included a spinal fracture at the C2 vertebra, a fractured sternum, five broken ribs, a compound fracture of her right leg—nearly resulting in the amputation of her foot—as well as chronic pain, arthritis, and neck degeneration.

"It took months to learn to walk again, with my dad dubbing me his 'walking miracle baby,'" she told High Times. "I had a tracheotomy and was

in traction on my back in the ICU when a respiratory therapist compared cannabis to other medications as a bronchodilator or a productive cough that would loosen the phlegm, preventing my lungs from filling up and causing pneumonia. That's when I realized she was telling me that cannabis was medicine."

Once she returned home from the hospital, she dove headfirst into learning more about cannabis remedies, which continue to quell her pain to this day. Since then, her journey with cannabis has led to careers she never dreamt of having. >>

The Queen of Abbot Kinney Boulevard

The one-mile stretch hosting some of the hippest shops in Los Angeles makes up Abbot Kinney Boulevard in the eclectic town of Venice Beach, California. This is where Ossman began her career as owner of Abbot's Habit, a community hub where she gained the title "The Queen of Venice" in the mid-1990s.

She had a secret life, however, establishing the first cannabis delivery service with no name in the beach town and branching out to found the Privee Social Club, which hosted infused gatherings and dinners around the country, including a soiree for P Diddy. The web series *Smoke in the Kitchen* with Mama Sailene found her cooking side by side with Snoop Dogg for his website, *MERRY JANE*. *Merry Jane* dubbed her "Mama Sailene" when they produced her video series with the tagline, "Mama Sailene, a mother to none, mama to all." Ossman then went on to found the Glowing Goddess Getaways, a traveling cannabis camp-out for women.

Rolling Stone wrote that Ossman was "the goddess earth mother you always wished you had... Mama Sailene, the nurturing and cheery feminist cannabis guru of Southern California, really specializes in making sure everyone else is having a wonderful time—and always has enough weed."

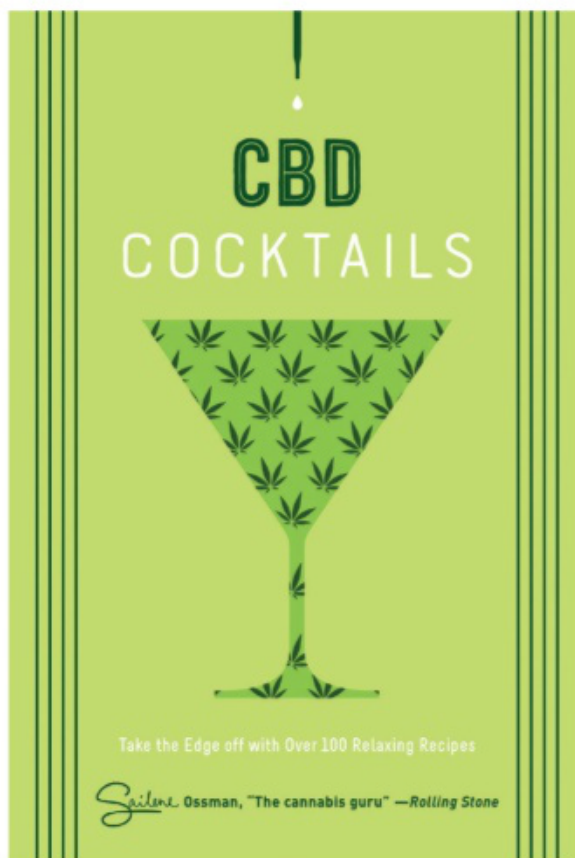
In 2020, Ossman published the book *CBD Cocktails* encouraging readers to "take the edge off with over 100 relaxing recipes."

The book is unique in that each recipe incorporates various CBD (cannabidiol) tinctures made by different companies, available nationally either in dispensaries or by mail order. The idea is a novel one. How many times have you stood looking at the sea of CBD tinctures at a dispensary and wondered what else you could do with them besides simple dosing?

Cali Sober

Ossman is an admitted California girl through and through. Since she doesn't consume alcohol, she was only too eager to incorporate cannabis mocktails into her recreational and medicinal dosing regimen. One section of her book is devoted to mocktails. The trend of using cannabis, but not alcohol, has

"As the plant loses its historical [negative] stigma, cannabis and CBD products have begun to flood the market, making the healthful benefits derived from CBD accessible to all, whether marijuana has been legalized where you live or not."



been called "Cali sober," and Ossman has included beneficial and tasty recipes for those who prefer this lifestyle.

"As the plant loses its historical [negative] stigma, cannabis and CBD products have begun to flood the market, making the healthful benefits derived from CBD accessible to all, whether marijuana has been legalized where you live or not," Ossman wrote in her book. "If it hasn't, it soon will be, as everyone has begun to learn of the incredible health benefits derived from this miracle plant."

In the book's introduction, Ossman also offers a brief overview of the history of the plant and its origins dating back to ancient times in countries we know today as China, Tibet, and India. She expounds on the plant's use as medicine and its place in shamanistic rituals. While the book is all about CBD, she also highlights

the medicinal benefits of cannabinoids working in synergy.

"Cannabinoid receptors in the body need higher levels of THC to be activated than those present in CBD products alone," Ossman wrote. "This is why users find that the products containing only CBD are less effective, and why products using the entire plant, THC and all, work best, especially when it comes to pain management."

Today, Ossman is the founder and owner of the Brewja Elixir in Joshua Tree, California, where she makes her home in the high desert. In her shop, you'll find mocktails and elixirs made with a variety of CBD products, herbs, plants, and fruits, including a myriad of medicinal mushrooms.

The cannabis plant has forever changed Ossman's life.

"The benefits from plants, and the healing I've witnessed for myself and others from CBD and cannabis in general, are too numerous to detail," she said. "This experience in witnessing the healing caused me to step up to the plate for this female plant, and there's no turning back. Cannabis has been my life, all of my adult life now, for a good reason. She's added so much to my life, and I'm honored to work for her." HT



MARTINI

This is the ultimate form of sophistication in a glass. If you like a simple drink, reach for a simple CBD add on like a neutral tincture.

Ingredients

4 parts gin

1 part dry vermouth

1 lemon twist

Neutral CBD tincture, to taste

Glassware: cocktail glass

Place the gin and vermouth in a cocktail shaker filled with ice. Shake vigorously, strain the mixture into a cocktail glass, and garnish with the lemon twist and the tincture.



XZIBIT'S NEW CANNABIS PARTNERSHIP.
p. 120



THC GENE EDITING.
p. 124



EDIBLE ESCAPADE

Minnesota passes a bill to allow edibles containing hemp-derived THC in any form.

By Benjamin M. Adams

WHILE THC DERIVED FROM MARIJUANA REMAINS ILLEGAL FOR non-patients in Minnesota, edibles containing any form of THC derived from hemp are now legal thanks to a new confusing law. What began as an attempt to mitigate unrestrained delta-8 THC sales turned into something else entirely.

Per the new law that went into effect on July 1, adults in Minnesota 21 years or older may buy hemp-derived products that contain up to 5 mg of THC per serving and 50 mg per package.

Earlier, Gov. Tim Walz signed HF 3595 on June 2, and the bill was intended to resolve issues in the state's hemp industry, but it also created a handful of new questions.

Minnesota already allowed hemp and CBD products that contained less than 0.3% delta-9 THC, but the state law didn't specifically address intoxicating hemp-derived cannabinoids like delta-8 THC. That's why until recently, edibles containing hemp-derived cannabinoids flourished in a gray legal area—mostly in the form of gummies. In fact, delta-8 THC edibles

flourished so much in Minnesota that they attracted lawmakers' attention.

The new law revised section 151.72 of the Minnesota Statutes by defining "non-intoxicating cannabinoid" as "substances extracted from certified hemp plants that do not produce intoxicating effects when consumed by any route of administration." But as lawyers have pointed out, the same law inconsistently allows for hemp-derived edible products to be sold, as long as they contain no more than 0.3% of any THC and no more than 5 mg of any THC in a single serving, or more than a total of 50 mg of any THC per package. While marijuana-derived products remain illegal, THC extracted from hemp or marijuana is the same chemical.

This new law essentially creates a legal loophole. In a nutshell, state lawmakers swapped unregulated delta-8 THC for loosely regulated delta-8 and delta-9 THC in edibles.

Even state lawmakers who accidentally supported the bill were confused. Republican state Sen. Jim Abeler told the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* that he did not realize this law would allow THC-infused edibles of any kind and thought it would only apply to delta-8 THC products.

The whole point of the legislation was to regulate delta-8 THC sales. Sen. Mark Koran pushed to regulate delta-8 THC, but lawmakers mistakenly used the broader language of cannabinoids, which includes delta-9 THC. Jason Tarasek serves on the board of directors of the Minnesota Cannabis Association and has been practicing law for nearly 20 years. He founded Minnesota Cannabis Law in 2018. >>



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“It’s a big step towards full adult-use legalization in Minnesota,” says Tarasek, hinting that there is more to come.

Tarasek personally lobbied in favor of Minnesota’s THC edible law and will likely lobby for more in the future. Proponents of the bill knew it would expand the state’s definition of THC and hope it will be a stepping stone to full legalization.

“The law allows for, in compliance with the federal farm bill and our state legislation, up to 0.3% of any THC, to be honest—so long as it doesn’t have over 0.3% delta-9 THC. We now allow for the sale of food and beverages with hemp-derived THC, up to 5 mg per serving or 50 mg per package. The retailers have access to gummies for the first day of sales, but we expressed that THC seltzers and other beverages will be hitting shelves shortly.”

●●
“We are beginning what is a bizarre situation because it’s typically full adult-use legislation or medical. We are somewhere now in the middle where we are allowing up to 5 mg per serving of THC in food and beverages.”

- Jason Tarasek

Delta-8 THC—one of the most common hemp-derived cannabinoids that cause some intoxicating effects—is often converted from CBD in a lab, so the cannabinoid causes some division, even within the hemp community.

What Minnesota officials are seeing is that people are traveling to Wisconsin when they want more potent hemp-derived edibles. Wisconsin adopted the 2018 Farm Bill like many other states and has no restrictions on the allowable milligrams of hemp-derived cannabinoids like delta-8 THC. Delta-8 THC edibles have taken off in both states.

Furthermore, Minnesota has no licensing system in place for edibles that can have intoxicating effects.

“We are beginning what is a bizarre situation because it’s typically full-adult-use legislation or medical,” Tarasek adds. “We are somewhere now in the middle where we are allowing up to 5 mg per serving of THC in food and beverages. Oddly, there is no licensing requirement. So I expect our legislature when they return in January, will make some additional regulations. But for now, it’s a bit of the Wild West.”

Tarasek says that many retailers have already been selling these types of edibles, but the law change will definitely impact his practice.

“We are busy helping clients establish businesses in this new market,” he says. “And I am helping my Minnesota clients get connected with out-of-state suppliers of gummies and beverages. Because we do not have the infrastructure here to serve this market. We have a lot of pent-up demand. It’s been pretty fun to watch the products fly off the shelves, and now we just need to keep working hard.”

Expect further regulations coming when Minnesota’s legislature reconvenes in early 2023. 

HIGH FIVE

FIVE HARVEST ROCK SONGS

A soundtrack to herald in the harvest season.

by Benjamin M. Adams

1 ↘

**BAD MOON RISING -
CREEDENCE CLEARWATER
REVIVAL**

Bad Moon Rising hit number two in the U.S. *Billboard* chart eight days after the Apollo 11 moon landing in 1969. It was inspired by *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, a 1941 film based on a short story about a hurricane that destroys an entire community’s harvest, and everyone was affected except for one man who made a deal with the devil. The film had an impact on vocalist John Fogerty. *Rolling Stone* ranked it No. 364 among its “500 Greatest Songs of All Time.” Unfortunately, Creedence Clearwater Revival was burdened with the number two curse, as many of the band’s songs reached number two, but not number one in the charts.

2 ↘

**SEASONS OF WITHER -
AEROSMITH**

Steven Tyler wrote this song in 1973, watching the landscape transform before winter at the house he lived at with drummer Joey Kramer in Needham, Massachusetts. Guitarist Joe Perry reportedly said he likes *Seasons of Wither* much more than the more commercially successful ballad *Dream On*, which became more of a defining piece of Aerosmith’s early career. The song is about hound dogs under the moon, fireflies, and living on borrowed time. And at nearly six minutes long, the song isn’t the typical three-minute jams you hear on the radio.

3 ↘

**FOREVER AUTUMN -
MOODY BLUES**

Some songs have a more winding history than others. The core melody behind *Forever Autumn*

began as a short jingle for a Lego commercial, originally written by Jeff Wayne and tweaked by several other songwriters in succession. The Moody Blues were eventually chosen to record a version of the song on a rock record. The lyrics about migrating birds in the autumn sky and the waning hours of sunlight appeared to resonate with fans and it reached #5 on the U.K. Singles Chart in August 1978.

4 ↘

**HARVEST MOON -
NEIL YOUNG**

Neil Young’s interest in farming goes way back. He co-founded Farm Aid, a concert to benefit struggling farmers, in 1985, along with Willie Nelson and John Mellencamp. As a solo artist, Linda Ronstadt joined him for vocals on this November 2, 1992 title track *Harvest Moon* from the album of the same name. According to Songfacts, Young once said that the moon had mysterious “quasi-religious” powers, and that belief influenced this song. The song itself definitely has a mysterious feel. And how can you possibly go wrong with one-fourth of Crosby, Stills, Young, and Nash?

5 ↘

FARMHOUSE - PHISH

Admittedly, *Farmhouse* (2000) is a bit more pop- and radio-oriented than Phish’s typical jam-rock turnout. The band is also synonymous with copious amounts of pot smoke from their cult-like following at concerts. Vocalist Trey Anastasio said that in the early 1990s, he rented farmhouses in the Stowe area of Vermont to just chill and write songs. He pulled up to a farmhouse in an old 1970s RV and wrote the song about the Northern Lights phenomenon (not the strain) and cluster flies. On April 20, Phish celebrated the first year of legal weed in New York at Madison Square Garden.



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BUDDY UP

Alvin Joiner, more commonly known as Xzibit, announced on June 20 that his cannabis company, Napalm Brands, would partner up with Buddies Brand, Inc. Although Napalm is currently only available in California, the Buddies collaboration may eventually see the brand expand into other markets such as Oregon and Washington. "For Napalm, this partnership allows our brand to further streamline and expedite product development, vertically integrate, and provide distribution to our retail partners at a much higher level," said Joiner, who was recently appointed as the creative director for both Buddies and Napalm cannabis products. "West Coast cannabis customers love Buddies products, and this partnership of two powerhouse brands, plus NABIS for distribution, will take us to new heights and help expand Napalm into more markets." Buddies President Bryan Cochran praised Joiner's work ethic and passion for cannabis and music and expressed high expectations for the future.

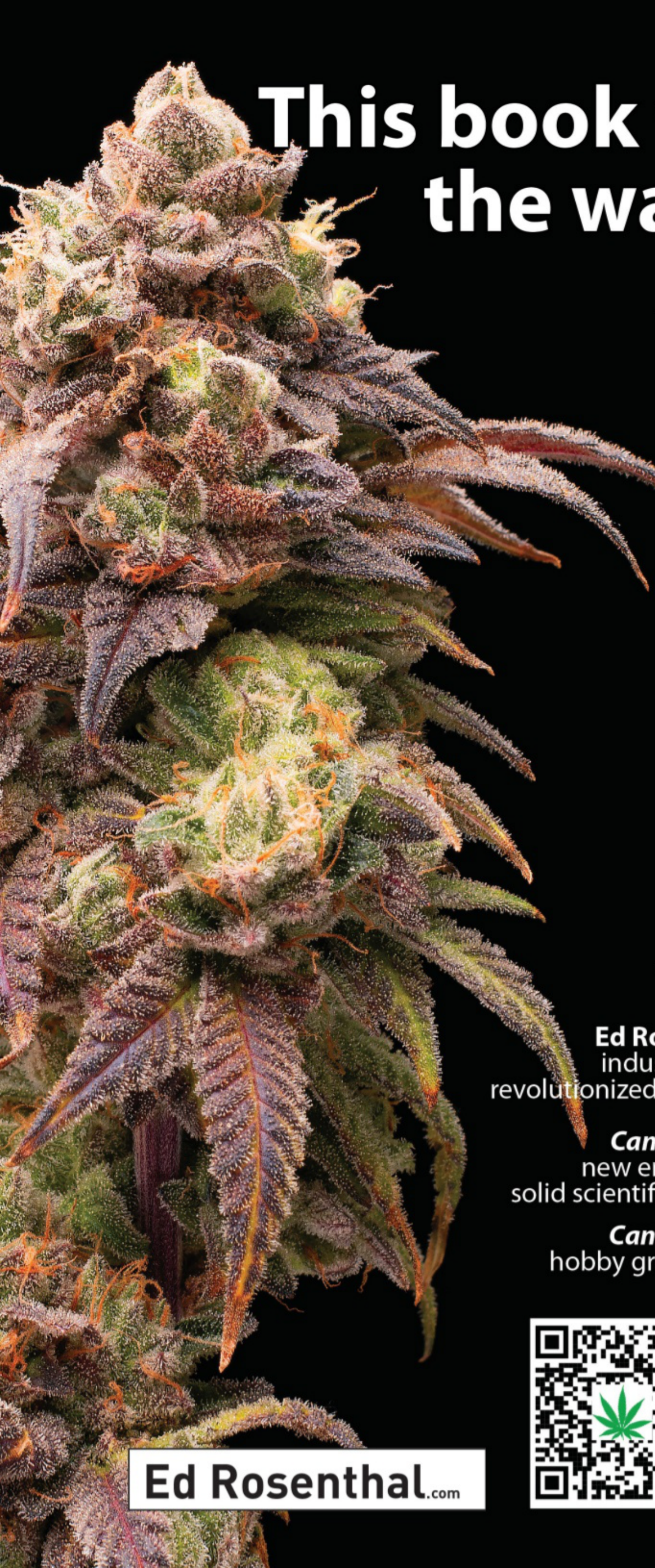


CBD FOR ATHLETIC RECOVERY

The National Basketball Association Players Association (NBPA) announced a multi-year partnership with Harrington Wellness's CBD product line Re+Play, owned by former NBA athlete Al Harrington. "Re+Play's partnership with the NBPA will provide consumers with a wealth of trusted, technology-driven products to help them recover like a pro," said Harrington in a press release. "As we move into the next phase of the Re+Play brand with our strategic partners at Amazon, the NBPA, and Walmart, we are excited to once again reimagine how we help athletes of all levels recover from pain with CBD and other innovative technology." The first product to come from this partnership will be a line of "proprietary formulated recovery creams" created by Avicanna.

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK

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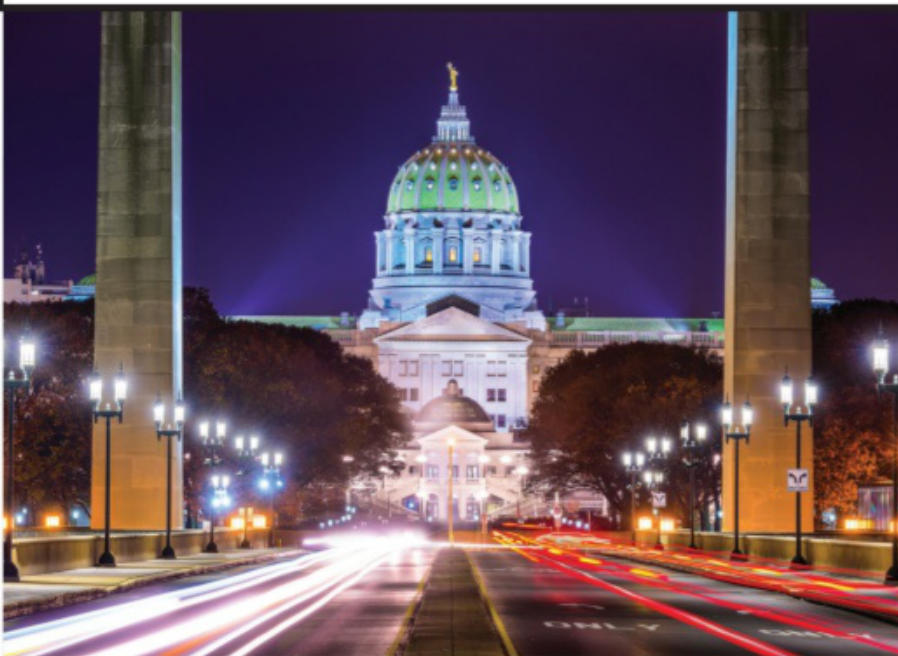
A WORLD FIRST

One company in Canada will soon become the first to open a cannabis dispensary on a university campus. Burb Cannabis Corp., based in British Columbia, announced on July 5 that the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board of Directors approved its dispensary to operate at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver campus. “This was a big victory for us after a contentious debate around public safety and community fit,” said Burb CEO and co-founder John Kaye. “Despite concerns grounded in age-old stigma from nearby residents, many of whom were off-shore residential owners, the board made an informed decision that aligned with the overwhelming voice of the student body as well as the tenets of legalization in our country. We’re beyond excited to bring Burb to campus and provide safe access to students and residents this fall.” In British Columbia, a brand may only own a maximum of eight dispensaries within the province, and this will mark Burb’s eighth and final dispensary license. Burb also recently expanded into California and can be found in around 50 retailers across the state, including Urbn Leaf, Dr. Greenthumb, and Emjay.



STATE SUSTAINABILITY

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) Cannabis Restoration Grant Program recently awarded \$1.7 million on July 8 to help cannabis cultivator applicants obtain an annual license and embrace sustainable growing practices. “These are well-conceived and timely planning projects that will result in lasting benefits to fish and wildlife resources and the habitats they depend upon for survival,” said CDFW Acting Cannabis Program Director Sarah Paulson. “Supporting these entities will help preserve California’s natural resources and pave the way for future cannabis farmers in the regulated market.” Sun + Earth received \$395,643, and the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District received \$1,388,181 for conservation efforts in the South Fork Eel River Watershed. This is the first round of CDFW’s Qualified Cultivator Grant Program, but qualifying cannabis cultivators can also apply for funds between now and spring of 2023.



BANKING WITH BENEFITS

On July 11, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf signed House Bill 311, which includes provisions to protect financial institutions that choose to work with cannabis businesses. The bill notes that banks and insurance companies will be covered under this law. “A financial institution authorized to engage in business in this commonwealth may provide financial services to or for the benefit of a legitimate cannabis-related business and the business associates of a legitimate cannabis-related business,” the bill states. The law does not require any financial institutions to work with cannabis businesses, but also states that government agencies cannot prohibit or penalize these partnerships. According to the *Pittsburgh City Paper*, Pennsylvania Cannabis Coalition’s Executive Director Meredith Buettner applauded the support from Gov. Wolf. “House Bill 331 ensures equity for legitimate cannabis businesses, but most importantly, it sends a signal to the federal government to pass a national ‘safe banking act’ that protects an industry that helps millions of patients and generates billions in tax dollars,” Buettner said.

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DATA DRIVEN

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its World Drug Report 2022 on June 27, the first report to release in “the post-pandemic world,” which reveals new observations regarding worldwide drug use. Regarding cannabis, the UNODC shared in the “drug market trends of cannabis and opioids” portion of the report that daily cannabis use has continued to accelerate, with an estimated number of global cannabis users now sitting at 209 million as of 2020. The report breaks down the impacts of cannabis legalization through eight main topics of discussion: public health, economy, driving, illicit market, replacement, arrests, crime, and products. “[This chapter] provides the latest estimates on cannabis use and discusses the latest trends in regional cannabis markets,” the report states. “The chapter also briefly reviews the medical use of cannabinoid-based pharmaceutical products and the extent to which countries allow medical use of cannabis products. The chapter continues with a brief overview of the latest developments in cannabis regulations in selected countries and concludes with a detailed analysis of early indications of the impact of cannabis legalization on public health, public safety, market dynamics, and criminal justice responses in the jurisdictions in North America that have legalized the non-medical use of cannabis.”

AUSSIE APPROVAL

According to the most recent National Drug Strategy Household Survey analysis from 2019 (originally published in 2020), more Australians now support cannabis over tobacco. The new report, called “Australia’s attitudes and perceptions toward drugs by region, 2019,” was updated online on July 15 and stated that “For the first time in 2019, cannabis had a higher level of personal approval of regular use by an adult than tobacco (20% compared with 15%).”

The survey asked questions from 20,000 people over age 14 and found that participants believed strongly in enforcing stricter penalties for supplying tobacco to minors, but also saw 41% in support of cannabis legalization compared to the 25% of people who were asked the same question in 2010. Participants also reported support for treatment and education programs for specific drugs, such as heroin (51%), methamphetamine (49%), hallucinogens (46%), and ecstasy (40%), but only 24% believe the same should be true for cannabis consumption (24%).



SILENCING THC

The biotech company Growing Technology Research Inc. (GTR) shared on June 23 that it had discovered a gene editing method that can lower the THC percentage in cannabis and hemp plants. Essentially, it can “turn down,” “turn off,” or “turn up” THC gene expression—a process which they refer to as the “Delta-9 Dial.” GTR CEO Sam Proctor explained the significance of this discovery and how it could affect the industry’s future. “Understanding the mechanics of the THC pathway are perhaps the most important component of truly unlocking the promise of cannabis and hemp,” said Proctor in a press release. “We are very excited about our results to date and look forward to further innovating for the benefit of stakeholders across the cannabis and hemp supply chain.” For example, an estimated 10% of hemp plants between 2018-2020 “went hot,” which means they exceeded the federal limit of less than 0.3% THC and were forced to be destroyed, but silencing THC in a cannabis plant could eliminate this result. The same process of decreasing THC in a plant can also modify the increased percentage of CBD and CBC, Proctor said in an interview with *Forbes*.

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There are no THCA diamonds in the pre-roll, but you won't need them, given the natural strength of the strain Black Diamonds (Blackberry x Diamond OG) producing a potent high combined with a great taste of blackberries and grapes. The **Black Diamonds pre-roll** clocks in at 24.4% THC and put us in a creative and happy state of mind. This pre-roll makes a great hiking companion for a long walk into the woods.

Prices vary





TRIPLE THE HIGH

hamiltondevices.com

Feeling like a ménage à trois of vapor and flavor from three carts or concentrate coils at once? The **Starship triple vape cartridge** by Hamilton Devices does the trick and allows you to hit three vape carts or at once. You screw in three 510-thread vape carts into the charging port. The long glass mouthpiece covers all three and funnels them into one massive hit. It also has a carb cap for extra filtration. Three clicks to power it up, and fire away! If you're a bong lover, you'll love the complimentary glass-on-glass bong attachment to vape your bong hits. Click the button three times to activate for takeoff and launch!

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maps.org

Every member of the family can help support psychedelic progress, no matter how small. Even babies and toddlers can help spread the word that psychedelics work to aid psychological wellbeing with this onesie that's too cute to pass up. The **support psychedelic science hooded baby onesie** is made from 100% cotton with a reinforced three-snap closure. The teddy bear ears are a nice touch that will definitely bring a smile to your face. Best of all? All proceeds support ongoing MAPS psychedelic research, so you know that your money is going to a good cause.

\$25



MICRODOSING, ALLERGIES & INSOMNIA



Can microdosing cannabis help?

-Lil Dabble Doya

I was skeptical about all the microdosing data in the past, but at least one case study suggests that less than a milligram of THC and CBD helped a woman who had traumatic brain injury. Microdosing cannabis allegedly helped her have fewer muscle spasms, a better sense of humor, and improved sleep. Plenty of 1 mg THC and CBD products exist, so if you want to just start with as little as possible, I'm sure you can find out what works best for you.

Can people actually have a cannabis allergy?

-Sneezing Sally

The plant, or more specifically its pollen, can produce at least a couple allergic reactions. Sometimes symptoms do not appear until multiple weeks after exposure. The allergy is very rare but definitely exists. The standard

"skin prick" tests don't usually include cannabis so most folks can't identify the allergy easily. A few days away from the plant can often reveal if symptoms change. Good luck!

Surely data supports that cannabis helps insomnia, right?

-Snoozing Steve

Recent work in Canada suggests that plenty of strains seem to help insomnia. Nevertheless, we've never done the randomized, placebo-controlled trial. High CBD or stimulating strains are probably less likely to help treat insomnia. Doses definitely vary from person to person as well. Good sleep hygiene is literally free and has a great impact on sleep, so I'd recommend making sure you're doing what you can without any substances before you add cannabis to a regular routine.

Has the sky really fallen with legalization? I don't see any changes about increased cannabis use one way or another, now that other states and some countries have legalized it.

-Chicken Little

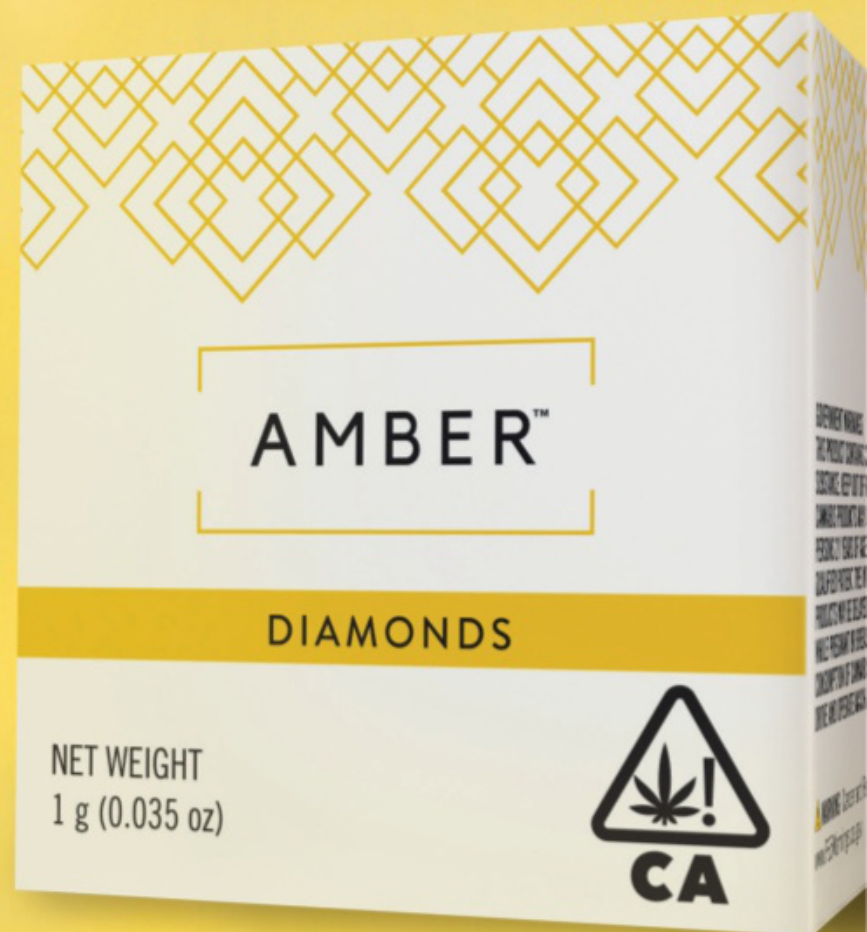
An international research team looked at data from Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, collected between 1994–2017. They found no links between liberal policies and increased use. Seems like legalization has few disadvantages. Let's hope that the world gets the message! 

Got a question for Dr. Mitch? Email him at 420research@gmail.com

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DOPE RIDER

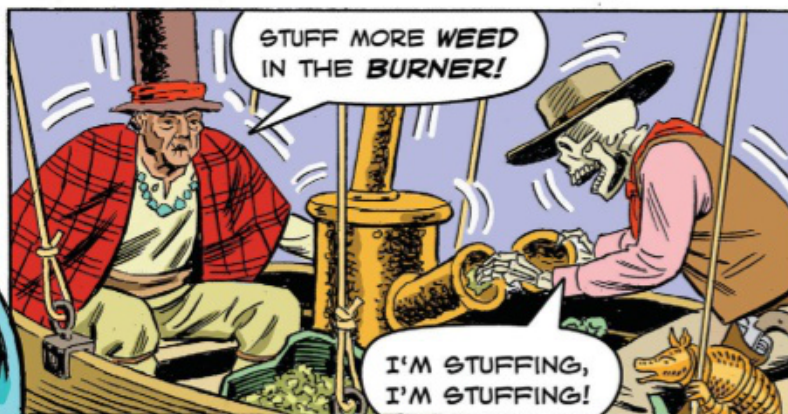
DOPE RIDER AND DILLY ARE IN THE CHIEF'S WEED-FUELED AIRSHIP WHEN A TORNADO ARISES.



THE STORM GOD LOOKS ANGRY.

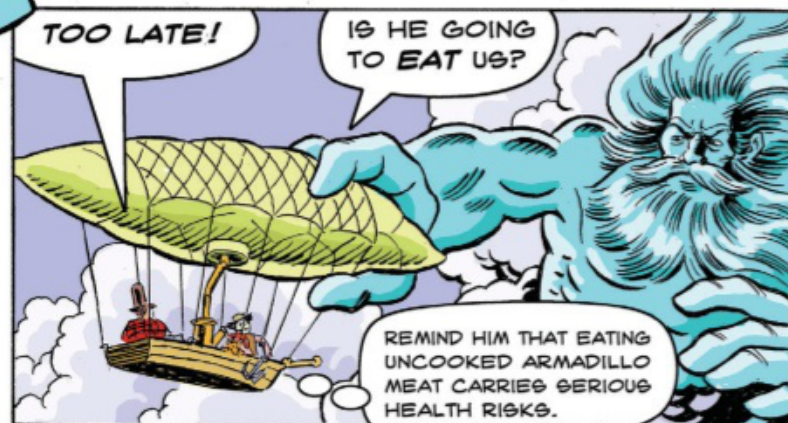
WE NEED MORE ALTITUDE!

THOSE GRUBS I ATE FOR LUNCH ARE NOT SITTING WELL.



STUFF MORE WEED IN THE BURNER!

I'M STUFFING, I'M STUFFING!



TOO LATE!

IS HE GOING TO EAT US?

REMINDED HIM THAT EATING UNCOOKED ARMADILLO MEAT CARRIES SERIOUS HEALTH RISKS.



NO, HE'S GOING TO SMOKE US!

THE STORM GOD INHALES THE THC-INFUSED SMOKE..



THEN DISCARDS THE EMPTY BAG.



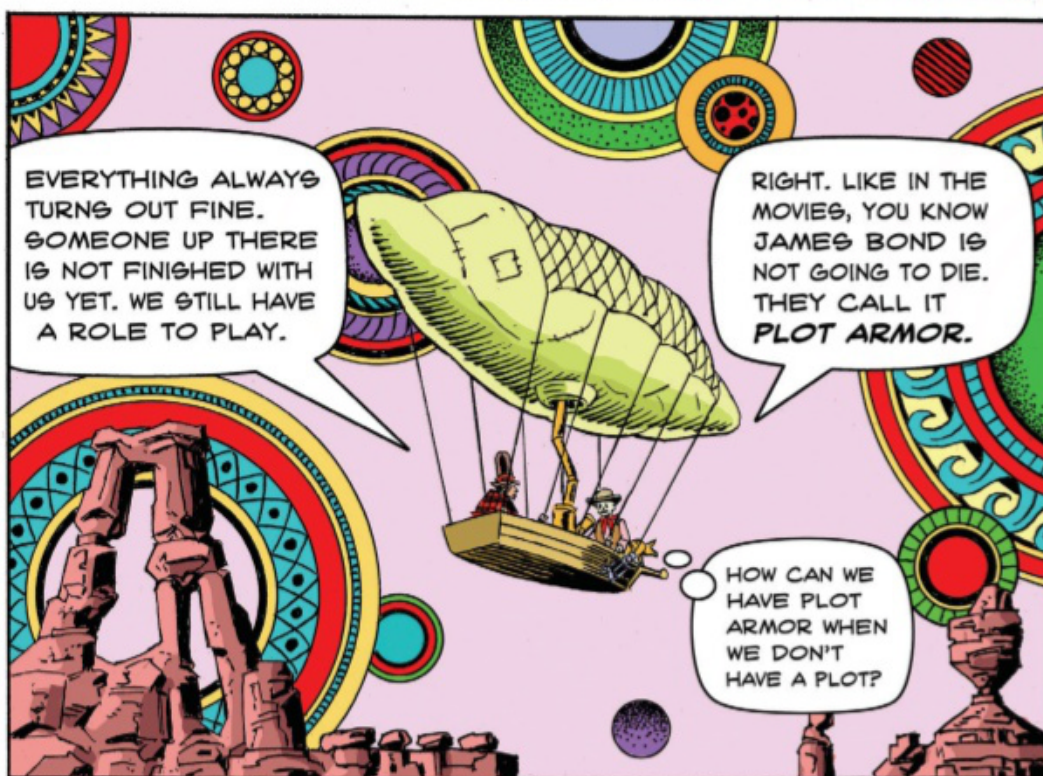
AS THEY PLUMMET TOWARD THE JAGGED ROCKS BELOW...

EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.

YEAH, I KNOW.

PLEASE EXPLAIN! PLEASE EXPLAIN!

PAUL KIRCHNER



EVERYTHING ALWAYS TURNS OUT FINE. SOMEONE UP THERE IS NOT FINISHED WITH US YET. WE STILL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY.

RIGHT. LIKE IN THE MOVIES, YOU KNOW JAMES BOND IS NOT GOING TO DIE. THEY CALL IT PLOT ARMOR.

HOW CAN WE HAVE PLOT ARMOR WHEN WE DON'T HAVE A PLOT?



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